This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

**Usage guidelines**

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

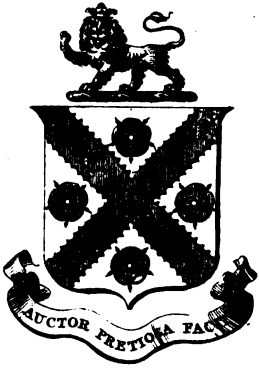
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

**About Google Book Search**

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3 3433 08163994 4




James Lenox.

Digitized by Google

ZDB
Sims
Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

TRANSFER FROM LENOX.

Sims I

ZDB

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

CONVERSION OF ST PAUL.

Published by J. Duncan, Paternoster Row.

Digitized by Google

# CHRISTIAN RECORDS;

OR,

## A SHORT AND PLAIN

## HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST:

CONTAINING

THE LIVES OF THE APOSTLES,
AN ACCOUNT OF THE SUFFERINGS OF MARTYRS,
THE RISE OF THE REFORMATION,
AND THE PRESENT STATE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

BY THE REV. THOMAS SIMS, M.A.

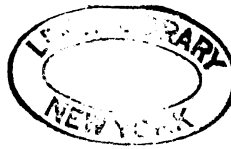
THIRD EDITION,
CORRECTED AND ENLARGED.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR JAMES DUNCAN, PATERNOSTER ROW

MDCCCXXVIII.

Digitized by Google

LONDON:
Printed by W. CLOWES,
Stamford-street.




Digitized by Google

# PREFACE

## TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE following work consists of plain facts, in plain language, and was drawn up for plain people; chiefly for the poor, and for children, but for others also, who have not time to read, or money to purchase, the very valuable, but large and expensive volumes of Mosheim, Milner, and other historians. As any attempt at elegance of composition would have been quite foreign to the nature of this work, those who delight in tasteful literature will find little to gratify them, unless they have learned to value the sacred words and heroic deeds of persons "of whom the world was not worthy." It has been the Writer's aim, to be candid in selecting the names, and recording the excellences, of Christians of different churches. To enumerate all the minor sects, and the various forms of error that have appeared in former or in later days, would not have been compatible with the object proposed in this small work. It was thought much better to omit them. These pages


Digitized by Google

were designed rather to convey lessons of instructive piety; and the substance of many large volumes has been, for this purpose, reduced to a portable size. As an acquaintance with church history is both interesting and important, the Writer cherishes the hope, that a work in this small, cheap form, will be given as a reward-book in charity-schools. If so, he will esteem that circumstance alone, his own more than sufficient reward.

---

The Writer has now the satisfaction to add, that a higher reward has attended the publication. Two treatises have been published in modern Greek, and two in Italian, extracted from this volume, for the purpose of exhibiting a picture of genuine primitive Christianity, and, by that means, of undermining the superstition prevalent in the Greek and Roman Catholic churches. These have been published under the superintendence of the Rev. Mr. Jowett of Malta. The late Dr. Milne, of the Anglo-Chinese College at Malacca, in a letter dated Dec. 4, 1821, acknowledging the receipt of a copy of the work, observed: "I was longing to meet with something of the kind, for I have been engaged for some time back in writing a small work in the Chinese language, attempting

Digitized by Google

to connect sacred and ecclesiastical history, beginning from the creation, and going onward through the Old and New Testaments, and to conclude with a brief view of the history of the church down to the present time. The wearisome toil of referring constantly to church histories written on a large scale, seemed unavoidable till your little work came to hand.—It seems much adapted to the plan of my work, and will save me, if not all, yet a full half of the labour of referring to other works, and it is probable that parts of your little work will be turned into Chinese before this reaches you."

The opinions of such judicious men as Dr. Milne and Mr. Jowett, on the importance of imparting a knowledge of church history to the Heathen—especially the new converts from Heathenism—as well as to the members of degenerate Christian churches, may possibly induce other persons to translate portions of the work into different foreign languages.

Digitized by Google

# CONTENTS.


Page

INTRODUCTION — — — — — — — — — — 1

BOOK I.

Christian Records respecting the First Century.

Page

CHAPTER I.

Brief Account of the Labours of the Apostles and Evangelists.

1. St. Peter the Apostle — 4
2. St. Andrew the Apostle — 5
St. James the Great, the Apostle — — — 7
4. St. John the Evangelist and Apostle — — — ib.
5. St. Philip the Apostle — 9
6. St. Bartholomew the Apostle 10
7. St. Matthew the Evangelist and Apostle — — — 11
8. St. Thomas the Apostle — ib.
9. St. James the Less, (called also the Just,) an Apostle 12
10. St. Simon the Apostle — 14
11. St. Jude the Apostle — ib.
12. St. Matthias the Apostle — 15
13. St. Paul the Apostle — 16
14. St. Mark the Evangelist — ib.
15. St. Luke the Evangelist — 17

CHAPTER II.

Persecutions of the Church.

1. The Persecution by Nero 18
2. The Destruction of Jerusalem 19
3. The Persecution by Domitian 20

BOOK II.

Christian Records respecting the Second Century.

CHAPTER I.

Progress of the Gospel.

1. The general diffusion of Christianity — — — 21
2. The Introduction of Christianity into Britain — — 21

CHAPTER II.

Persecutions of the Church.

1. The Persecution by Trajan 24
2. The Persecution by Adrian 26
3. The Persecution by Marcus Aurelius — — — 27

BOOK III.

Christian Records respecting the Third and beginning of the Fourth Century.

CHAPTER I.

Progress of the Gospel — 32

CHAPTER II.

Persecutions of the Church.

1. The Persecution by Severus 33
2. The Persecution by Maximin 35
3. The Persecution by Decius 37
4. The Persecution by Valerian 42
5. The Persecution by Aurelian 47
6. The Persecution by Diocletian 49

BOOK IV.

Records respecting the Virtues and Religious Customs of the Primitive Christians.

CHAPTER I.

Virtues of the Primitive Christians.

1. Loyalty — — — — 61
2. Honesty — — — — 62
3. Purity — — — — 63
4. Humility — — — — 64
5. Heavenly-mindedness — — 67
6. Brotherly love — — — 69
7. Humanity — — — — 71

CHAPTER II.

Religious Customs of the Primitive Christians.

1. Private Devotions — — — 72
2. Family Worship — — — 74
3. Public Worship — — — 75
4. The Sacraments — — — 76
5. Fasts and Festivals — — ib.
6. Church Discipline — — — 78


Digitized by Google

## BOOK V.

Christian Records respecting the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Centuries.


CHAPTER I.
Progress of the Gospel — 79

CHAPTER II.
Persecutions of the Church.
1. The Persecution in Persia 85
2. The Persecutions by the Arians, and by the Emperor Julian 86
3. The Persecution in Great Britain by the Saxons — 93

CHAPTER III.
Brief Account of Persons of eminent Piety — — — 94


## BOOK VI.

Christian Records respecting the Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Centuries.


CHAPTER I.
Progress of the Gospel — 103
1. Progress of the Gospel in the Seventh Century — — 104
2. Progress of the Gospel in the Eighth Century — — 106
3. Progress of the Gospel in the Ninth Century — — 107
4. Progress of the Gospel in the Tenth Century — — 109
5. Progress of the Gospel in the Eleventh Century — — 113
6. Progress of the Gospel in the Twelfth Century — — 114
7. Progress of the Gospel in the Thirteenth Century — 115
8. Progress of the Gospel in the Fourteenth Century — 116
9. Progress of the Gospel in the Fifteenth Century — — 117

CHAPTER II.
Brief Account of Persons of eminent Piety — — — 119

CHAPTER III.
Persecutions of the Church.
1. Persecution of the Waldenses and Albigenses in France, Piedmont, &c. — — 133
2. Persecution of the Lollards in England — — — 141
3. Persecution of the Hussites 145
4. Persecution of the Moravians, or United Brethren — — 151


## BOOK VII.

Christian Records respecting the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century.


CHAPTER I.
The Reformation in Germany 157

CHAPTER II.
The Reformation in Switzerland and Italy.
1. The Reformation in Switzerland — — — — 164
2. The Reformation in Italy 168

CHAPTER III.
The Reformation in Sweden and Denmark — — 174

CHAPTER IV.
The Reformation in France 176

CHAPTER V.
The Reformation in the British Dominions.
1. Henry VIII.'s Opposition to the Pope, and Persecution of Protestants — — — 187
2. Edward VI.'s Reformation of the Church, and personal Piety — — — — 198
3. The Life and Death of Lady Jane Grey — — — 197
4. The Persecution of the Church of England by Queen Mary — — — — 201
5. The Restoration of the Church of England by Queen Elizabeth — — — 223
6. The Reformation of the Church of Ireland — — 224
7. The Reformation of the Church of Scotland — 225
8. Remarks on the Reformation in the British Dominions — 229

CHAPTER VI.
The Reformation in Spain and the Netherlands.
1. The Reformation in Spain 241
2. The Reformation in the Netherlands — — — 244

CHAPTER VII.
The Reformation in Poland, Hungary, and Transylvania 253


Digitized by Google

## BOOK VIII.

### Christian Records respecting the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries.


CHAPTER I. Page

Progress of the Gospel — 256

CHAPTER II.

Persecutions of the Church.

1. Persecution in Japan, &c. 262
2. Persecution in Malabar — ib.
3. Persecution in the Valtoline 263
4. Persecution in Bohemia — 264
5. Persecution in Ireland — 271
6. Persecution in France — 272
7. Persecution in Piedmont — 274

CHAPTER III. Page

Brief Account of Persons of eminent Piety.

1. Pious Princes and Princesses 288
2. Religious Noblemen and Statesmen — — — 287
3. Pious Prelates and Clergymen of the united Church of England and Ireland — 295
4. Eminent Non-conformists 302
5. Pious Roman Catholic Prelates, &c. — — — 305
6. Eminent Foreign Protestants 306


## BOOK IX.

### Christian Records respecting the Eighteenth Century.


CHAPTER I.

Progress of the Gospel.

1. Missions of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge — — — — 310
2. Missions of the United Brethren, or Moravians — 312
3. Efforts of various Modern Missionary Societies — 319

CHAPTER II.

Persecutions of the Church — 321

CHAPTER III.

Brief Account of Persons of eminent Piety.

1. Prelates and Clergymen of the Church of England — — 322
2. Eminent Ministers of Scotland — — — — 327
3. Eminent Non-conformists 328
4. Eminent Foreign Ministers 329
5. Distinguished Religious Laymen — — — — 330


## BOOK X.

### Christian Records respecting the Commencement of the Nineteenth Century.


CHAPTER I.

Progress of the Gospel — 340

CHAPTER II.

Persecution of the Church — 343

CHAPTER III.

Brief Account of Persons of eminent Piety — — 344

Conclusion — — — 345


Digitized by Google

# CHRISTIAN RECORDS.

## INTRODUCTION.

THE records of both ancient and modern kingdoms are very important, and they contain most useful lessons, respecting the depravity of mankind, the evil of sin, and the providence of God. But, far more important are the records of the Christian church, which is truly the kingdom of God; a kingdom in which our Saviour Jesus Christ rules as the prince of peace over faithful Christians, who, as loyal subjects, love and obey his laws. The following pages of *Christian Records* contain the substance of the history of Christ's church militant on earth from the day of Pentecost, to the year of our Lord, 1827; which records may "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named," enable every reader by the grace of his Holy Spirit to read with humility, with a love of the truth, and with a desire to advance in Christian knowledge and holiness.

Although these are records of the church of Christ, it is proper to remark, that there were servants of God and of Christ from the earliest ages down to the time of our Saviour's appearing. Abel offered a sacrifice in faith, and believed that the promised seed of the woman would appear. Enoch walked with God; and others of the



Digitized by Google

children of Seth called upon the name of the Lord. Noah was a righteous man, and though his descendants forsook the service of Jehovah, and became corrupt, and worshipped the sun, moon, and stars, and graven images; yet some worshipped the Lord in spirit and in truth. Job trusted in the ever-living Redeemer. Abraham was content to leave his country and kindred rather than disobey God, for he looked for a better country, that is, an heavenly: he also foresaw the day of Christ and was glad. Jacob when near death said, I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord. Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; and from age to age many members of the Jewish church lived and died true believers in the future Messiah. They expected his coming, and offered the appointed sacrifices in faith; for they knew that the promises of God would be fulfilled; promises that had respect to the Lamb of God, which would in due time take away the sin of the world.

From this statement it follows that the Gospel is a *more perfect* religion than that revealed to the more ancient believers from Adam to Moses: and *more perfect* than the dispensation of the Jews; but not *contrary* to either of them. The ancient servants of God are not indeed called Christians; yet they were saved, as believers now are, through the merits of the only Saviour Jesus Christ; and they were sanctified, as believers now are, by the Holy Spirit.

When the Lord Jesus came into the world, few, very few in number, were those who truly served

Digitized by Google

God. In the heathen world, the wise and learned by wisdom knew not God: and darkness, gross darkness covered the people; they were lamentably ignorant, they were lamentably unholy, as St. Paul very awfully relates in the 1st chapter to the Romans. How corrupt the Jewish church was, may be seen upon reading the twenty-third chapter of St. Matthew. Even when Jesus the sun of righteousness, arising to give light to them that sat in darkness, condescended to preach the Gospel to the Jews, but few believed his report; he was despised, rejected, and crucified. He promised, however, that when he ascended to heaven he would send his Holy Spirit to his apostles, and fit them to be his ambassadors to all nations. This promise he graciously fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, giving his apostles both the gift of tongues, and grace to testify with courage, yet with humility, the truths of his blessed Gospel. With a brief record of the labours of the apostles, the following pages will begin. As those labours, however, are but partially recorded by St. Luke in the Acts, and as ecclesiastical historians did not arise to transmit an account of their labours till long after the Apostolic age, many particulars related must be considered very doubtful. The deficiency that we regret may have been permitted by infinite wisdom, on account of the unhappy propensity of men, not merely to venerate but even idolize apostles and saints, in those places where they were teachers and benefactors.



Digitized by Google

# BOOK I.

## CHRISTIAN RECORDS RESPECTING THE FIRST CENTURY.

## CHAPTER I.

### BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE LABOURS OF THE APOSTLES AND EVANGELISTS.

### SECT. 1.—ST. PETER, *the Apostle.*

SIMON PETER was of Bethsaida in Galilee, and originally a fisherman. He had on one occasion denied his Lord thrice; he afterwards diligently fed the sheep and lambs of Christ's flock.

His first discourses to the Jews and Gentiles are recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. At Samaria, (not at Rome,) Peter opposed the impostor Simon Magus, as related in the eighth chapter of the Acts. There is no good authority for believing that he was Bishop of Rome for many years, as some writers affirm. Indeed, it is doubtful whether he was ever at Rome; yet the common belief is, that he was crucified with his head downwards on the Vatican, in Nero's reign.

St. Peter's first Epistle was written to Jews or Israelites who lived in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia Minor, and Bithynia; and it is probable that, as the Apostle of the circumcision, he had preached the Gospel to them.

Digitized by Google

## Sect. 2.—St. ANDREW *the Apostle.*

Andrew, a fisherman of Galilee, was the brother of St. Peter. After our blessed Lord had ascended, and the Holy Ghost had descended upon the Apostles, he departed, it is said, to preach the Gospel to the Scythians; and on his journey to their country, preached in Cappadocia, Galatia, Bithynia, and along the Euxine Sea, winning many souls notwithstanding the savageness of the people. At Sinope, where he met St. Peter, the inhabitants of the city, being Jews for the greater part, did what they could to oppose the Apostle's doctrine. Afterwards he travelled through many provinces, till he came to Byzantium, (now Constantinople;) where he founded a church and ordained Stachys (whom St. Paul calls his beloved Stachys) bishop of that city. He then took his journey through Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, Achaia, and, as some affirm, Epirus; and having planted the Gospel in many places, came to Patræ, a city of Achaia, where he sealed his testimony with his blood. Philastrius, who lived in the year 380, relates, (and it is an instructive account if correct,) that Ægeas, a Pagan, the pro-consul, caused the Apostle to be brought before him, demanding how he durst pervert the people from their ancient worship? St. Andrew told him that he taught them the right way to everlasting happiness, and that having been brought up in idolatry, it was now high time for them to embrace saving knowledge. The pro-consul derided the Apostle as a propagator of *that*



Digitized by Google

*religion, whose author the Jews had put to death upon a cross;* but the Apostle then declared the infinite love of our Lord; explained that he came down from heaven, and, by taking our nature upon him, suffered death for lost and undone man, and that there was no other name under heaven by which any could be saved. The pro-consul, more enraged, told him, that if he would not sacrifice to the heathen gods, he should die.

The next day he was again brought into his presence, and he then began, by flattering devices, to persuade him not to destroy himself, but live with him and enjoy the pleasures of life. The Apostle told him, that if he would renounce idolatry and embrace the offers of the Gospel, he should have eternal life, which far exceeded what could be elsewhere expected. The pro-consul said, that the reason why he urged him to sacrifice to the gods, was, that by his example, such as had fallen off might return to the ancient worship; telling him, that otherwise he should suffer the greatest tortures that could be invented. To which the Apostle replied, that he saw it in vain any longer to persuade him to repentance, but that he himself did not fear tortures. He was then condemned to be crucified. That which most displeased the pro-consul, was, that his wife Maximilia and his brother Stratocles had received the christian faith. St. Andrew was fastened upon the cross with ropes, that he might be the longer dying, the cross being two beams like the letter X. From this cross, after he was fastened to it, he preached to the people, it is said, for the space of two days; and by his admirable patience converted many to the faith.

Digitized by Google

## Sect. 3.—St. JAMES *the Great, the Apostle.*

St. James, called the Great, was the son of Zebedee and brother of St. John. He was by birth a Galilean, and by occupation a fisherman. With Peter and John he was a spectator of our Saviour's transfiguration upon the mount, and was with him in the garden, at the time of his agony. This Apostle preached to his countrymen the Jews. Herod Agrippa, grandson to Herod the Great, caused a great number of Christians to be imprisoned, and amongst the rest this Apostle. A short time after, sentence of death was passed upon him, and he was slain with the sword. As for the tyrant, divine justice overtook him; he was eaten of worms until he died. See Acts xii. 23.

## Sect. 4.—St. JOHN *the Evangelist and Apostle.*

St. John was brother to St. James the Great, and, like his brother, was a fisherman in Galilee. They were by our Saviour named Boanerges, sons of thunder. To St. John our blessed Lord intrusted the care of his mother. He is said to have remained till near the year 66 in Judea. The churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, in Asia Minor, were particular objects of his care. Domitian commanded the pro-consul of Asia to send him bound to Rome; where he was put into a caldron of boiling oil, in which he stood, it is related, for many hours unhurt. The tyrant after-



Digitized by Google

wards banished him to the isle of Patmos. There he wrote his Book of Revelation. After the death of Domitian, St. John left Patmos and returned to Asia, but chiefly fixed his seat at Ephesus. It is said that when very aged and unable to preach, he still went to the church, and gave this short exhortation, "Love one another." Coming, it is said, on one occasion, to a place near Ephesus, in his visitation of the churches, the Apostle saw a youth whom he delivered to the bishop of the place with this charge, "I commend this person to thee to be looked to with all care and diligence, in the presence of Christ and the church." The bishop received the young man into his house, instructed him, and baptized him. But he fell into bad company; and, despairing of all hope of pardon from God, he let loose the reins, and he and his companions became robbers. St. John returning to the same place, required from the bishop the pledge he had left with him; "I mean (said St. John) the young man; it is the soul of my brother that I require." The old man with tears in his eyes answered, "He is dead, that is, he is dead to God; for he is become a robber in the mountains." The Apostle, it is said, immediately called for a horse and a guide, and made haste to the mountains; where, being taken by the robbers, he begged to be brought before the captain; but the young man, as soon as he perceived it was St. John, ran away. The Apostle, not regarding his own age and weakness, followed; and when he could not overtake him, exclaimed; "Why, O my son, dost thou fly from thy aged and unarmed father?

Digitized by Google

There is yet hope of salvation for thee." With that the robber stayed, and throwing away his arms, and shedding many tears, he embraced the aged Apostle, and was restored to the church. Reader! have you any friends or acquaintance, who once zealously practised religious duties, but, having been overcome by the devices of Satan, or the love of sin and the world, now neglect those duties? See here an example; use mild and affectionate means to bring them back to God, and to the way of peace. You may be so happy as to save a soul from death; go, ask the divine blessing, and make the attempt. What an encouragement does this record afford also to those who have fallen to return!

St. John lived till he was near one hundred years old, and probably died a peaceful death, not as a martyr. His Gospel and his Epistles show how much this "disciple whom Jesus loved," loved the Saviour and his fellow Christians.

## Sect. 5.—St. PHILIP *the Apostle.*

St. Philip was born at Bethsaida. Our Saviour, when in Galilee, called Philip to follow him. Happy in having found the Messiah, Philip sought for Nathanael, to whom he imparted the glad tidings. And, reader! if you know the truth as it is in Jesus, you should also try to lead your friends to a knowledge of the same. When this Apostle came to have his portion set apart, where he should preach the Gospel, part of the Upper Asia, it is said, fell to

Digitized by Google

his lot; and some affirm that he preached in Scythia. Having for many years carried on this great work, he came to Hierapolis, a city in Phrygia, where the people worshipped a serpent by the name of Jupiter Ammon. There, it is related, he preached the Gospel, and many of the idolaters became ashamed of the god they had worshipped, and were converted to the Christian faith. Satan, perceiving his kingdom decay, raised a persecution, and the Apostle was carried to prison, scourged, and then hanged by the neck to a pillar.

## Sect. 6.—St. BARTHOLOMEW *the Apostle.*

The ancients suppose that Bartholomew was the same person as Nathanael, that "Israelite indeed." He preached the Gospel to the Jews and Gentiles, accompanying Philip for the most part; and went, it is said, to hither India, by which some understand Arabia Felix. When Pantænus, a philosopher, but a Christian, went there many years after, he found St. Matthew's gospel written in Hebrew, which was reported to be the gospel St. Bartholomew left behind him, when he planted the gospel there. It has been said that at Hierapolis, a city in Phrygia, he would probably have suffered with St. Philip, had not an earthquake overawed his executioners, for he was at the same time bound to a cross; but when they saw that divine vengeance was ready to overtake them, they set him at liberty. From thence he travelled to Lycaonia, and thence departed to Albanopolis in Armenia the

Digitized by Google

Great; a place much given to idolatrous worship. The governor of the city caused him to be apprehended. His sentence was crucifixion, and when the day of execution came, he went cheerfully to death, exhorting his disciples to keep steadfast in the faith and doctrine that they had received, which was able to make them wise unto salvation. Several affirm that he was crucified with his head downwards.

## Sect. 7.—St. MATTHEW *the Evangelist and Apostle.*

St. Matthew, called Levi, was born at Nazareth. He was a publican, or tax-gatherer. He preached in Judea for several years, and at his departure wrote his Gospel. Some think that he went into Parthia, and having planted Christianity there, then travelled into Asiatic Ethiopia, where, by his preaching and working miracles, he converted many to the Christian faith. Having continued some time amongst them, it is said that he went into a country of cannibals, constituting Plato, one of his followers, bishop of Myrmena. We find in an ancient author, that he suffered martyrdom at Naddabar, a city of Ethiopia.

## Sect. 8.—St. THOMAS *the Apostle.*

This Apostle had two names, Thomas and Didymus. The province assigned him, Origen informs us, was Parthia: and Sophronius says that he preached the Gospel to the Persians,

Digitized by Google

Medes, Carmanians, Hyrcanians, Bactrians, and other people. It is recorded by an ancient writer, (but it does not seem at all probable,) that in Persia he met the three wise men who came to present their offerings to our Saviour at his birth; and that after he had baptized them, he took them with him as his fellow labourers in the Gospel. He probably then went to Asiatic Ethiopia, and at last to the East Indies, and preached the Gospel as far as Taprobane, (either Ceylon or Sumatra.) The tradition of the natives is, that St. Thomas came first to Socotra, an island in the Arabian sea, and thence departed to Cranganor, and having planted the Gospel, then went to the kingdom of Coromandel, preaching in several towns and villages, at last came to Meliapour the chief city. There, after having converted many to the faith, he was about to found a church for worship; but being forbidden by Sagamo, a prince of that country, it ceased for some time: afterwards, the apostle having converted the prince and a great part of his nobility, it was built. This so enraged the Brahmans, that they sought to destroy the Apostle; and one day, when he was praying in a solitary place, one of them stabbed him with a spear.

## Sect. 9.—St. JAMES *the Less, (called also the Just,) an Apostle.*

St. James is called the son of Alpheus; and he was of our Saviour's kindred, for he is called the Lord's brother. He was bishop of Jerusalem for many years. The following circumstances

Digitized by Google

have been transmitted respecting his martyrdom. The Scribes and Pharisees, from enmity to the christian faith, came to St. James at the feast of the passover, saying, that since the people were unsettled in their opinions, they wished that he should, from a convenient place, stand over the Temple porch and address them. To this, the Apostle consenting, they said with a loud voice, "Explain to us, Justus, since the people are so generally led away with the doctrine of Jesus, that was crucified, explain to us the religion of the crucified Jesus." To which the Apostle made answer, "Do ye inquire respecting Jesus the Son of man? he sits in heaven on the right hand of the Majesty on high, and will come again in the clouds of heaven." The people that were below no sooner heard this reply, but with a loud shout they glorified the blessed Jesus. The Scribes and Pharisees seeing their policy defeated, and that they had rather confirmed the people, grew so enraged, that they took him by force and threw him down from the battlements: notwithstanding which fall, he raised himself upon his knees and prayed for them. Some persons then struck him with clubs and stones, till one, with a fuller's club, beat out his brains, and by that means gave his soul a passage to the eternal habitations of bliss and joy. St. James's Epistle to the Twelve Tribes strongly enforces the necessity of connecting Christian practice with Christian belief.



Digitized by Google

## Sect. 10.—St. SIMON *the Apostle.*

This Apostle was probably son to Joseph, who espoused the blessed Virgin. Amongst the Apostles he is styled Simon the Canaanite, whence some conjecture that he was born at Cana, in Galilee. There were many sects amongst the Jews, and one called the sect of the Zealots. From this sect it is supposed he had the name Zelotes. It is said that he departed for Egypt, and having preached the Gospel for some time, departed thence for Cyrene, and into Libya and Mauritania. Many of the ancients have affirmed, that he sailed into Britain, and that he preached the Gospel here successfully; till the barbarous rage of the people crowned him with martyrdom. He was probably crucified.

## Sect. 11.—St. JUDE *the Apostle.*

This Apostle has three names, Jude, Thaddeus, and Lebbeus. He was brother to St. James, bishop of Jerusalem, and, like that Apostle, has left one very practical epistle. At his first setting out, he preached the Gospel in Judea, Samaria, Galilee, Idumea, and the cities of Arabia, and the countries adjacent; and he afterwards went into Syria and Mesopotamia, and to Edessa. Whether he preached the Gospel in Persia, and was put to death by the Magi, seems uncertain. That he was married and had children, appears by what follows. Domitian the emperor, having heard that there remained some persons of the

Digitized by Google

line of David, required that they should be brought before him; namely, two young men, who were the grandsons of St. Jude, and kinsmen to our Lord. When they were come into his presence, they confessed that they were of the race and posterity of David; whereupon he asked them what possessions they had? They told him they had but a few acres of land, which they improved to maintain themselves; showing him their hands, that he might be convinced that they lived by their labour. He then asked them respecting the Messiah and his kingdom. They answered, that it was not of this world, but in the highest heaven; and that in his good time, he would come in the clouds of heaven, attended with glory and power, to judge the quick and dead, and render to every man according to his works. Upon this the emperor dismissed them, though he had intended to put the whole race of David to death. Let the poor lay up this passage in their hearts: and let them remember that poverty with industry is true honour, and that "godliness with contentment is great gain."

## Sect. 12.—St. MATTHIAS *the Apostle.*

St. Matthias was probably one of the seventy disciples; and a way being made for him by the apostasy of Judas Iscariot, he was afterwards numbered amongst the twelve, and called to be an Apostle. He first preached the Gospel in Judea. Cappadocia was his principal place of abode, where he probably at last died a martyr; or, as others suppose, at Sebastople, near the



Digitized by Google

temple of the sun. The Greek offices relate, that he was hanged upon a cross.

## Sect. 13.—St. PAUL *the Apostle.*

St. Paul was born at Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, much famed for learning; his first name was Saul. From a persecutor he became a preacher, and a witness for Christ and his Gospel before kings and the children of Israel, and even amongst distant Gentile nations; whilst his numerous epistles remain for the edification of the Christian church in every age. The conversion, labours, and sufferings of St. Paul, are very fully related in the Acts of the Apostles. From the writings of the ancients it seems very probable that he preached the Gospel in Great Britain. It is related that when Poppæa Sabina, concubine to Nero, became a Christian, this so enraged the emperor, that he resolved on the apostle's death. St. Paul being come to the place of execution, and having recommended his spirit into the hands of his Lord and Saviour, had his head struck off with a sword.

## Sect. 14.—St. MARK *the Evangelist.*

St. Mark was probably one of the seventy disciples. His Gospel extended his usefulness to all nations and ages, but his ministry was chiefly devoted to Africa. He was sent by St. Peter into Egypt, to preach the Gospel, he then removed to Libya, where he likewise converted many; and also in Marmorica and Pentapolis.

Digitized by Google

On his return to Alexandria in Egypt, having reproved the people for bowing to stocks and stones, when the great solemnities of Serapis, one of their reputed gods, happened to be celebrated, the multitude attacked him whilst praying, and, fastening cords about his feet, dragged him through the streets, and cast him into a prison. The next morning they brought him out; but he died of fatigue and ill usage; after which they burnt his body.

## Sect. 15.—St. Luke *the Evangelist.*

St. Luke was born at Antioch, the chief city of Syria, and educated as a physician—probably in the schools of Greece and Egypt. He accompanied St. Paul in his travels, nor did he desert him in any of his troubles, but always proved a faithful friend. After having written his Gospel, he wrote also the Acts of the Apostles. It seems doubtful whether, as some relate, he preached the Gospel in Thebais, France, Italy, &c. One author says, that St. Luke preached the Gospel in Greece, and that a party of heathens hanged him upon an olive-tree; others think that he suffered at Rome under Nero.*

* Barnabas, another pious companion of St. Paul, often mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, was stoned to death by the Jews at Salamis, in Cyprus.



Digitized by Google

## CHAPTER II.

### PERSECUTIONS OF THE CHURCH.

We have just seen the Gospel, though at first like the small grain of mustard seed, grow up till its branches spread far and wide. During the first century, by the efforts of the Apostles and first disciples, the inhabitants of many and distant countries were taught to believe in the Lord Jesus. But if the progress of the Gospel was great, the persecutions that attended it were great also.

### Sect. 1.—*The Persecution by Nero.*

A very cruel persecution of the church took place in the year sixty-seven, under Nero, emperor of Rome, who, it is said, ordered that the city of Rome should be set on fire. This dreadful fire continued nine days: and Nero determined to lay the whole blame upon the Christians, to excuse himself, and to have an opportunity of practising new cruelties. He had some Christians sewed up in the skins of wild beasts, and then worried by dogs till they expired: and others dressed in shirts made stiff with wax, and set on fire in his gardens to illuminate them. This persecution was general throughout the Roman empire. St. Paul, St. Peter, Erastus of Corinth, Aristarchus the Macedonian, Trophimus, Joseph called Barsabas, and Ananias, Bishop of Damascus, are said to

Digitized by Google

have suffered as martyrs at this time. An inscription was set up in Portugal in memory of Nero's having not only delivered the country from robbers, but from such as had introduced a new superstition, (as Christianity was called,) —a proof of the extent of the persecution.

## Sect. 2.—*The Destruction of Jerusalem.*

Soon after Nero's persecution of the Christians at Rome, who were good subjects, the Jews, who had revolted, became sufferers for their rebellion. In the year seventy the Roman army marched under Titus against Jerusalem, the measure of whose iniquities was then filled up. The unhappy Jews who had rejected the true Messiah, and said, "His blood be upon us and upon our children," were about to suffer the awful visitation of God. Eleven hundred thousand perished by famine, the sword, and crucifixion. The temple was destroyed, and the prophecy* of Christ exactly fulfilled. God, however, provided, in a surprising manner, for the preservation of his people; for the Roman army withdrew for a time, when the Christians, recollecting their Saviour's words, (St. Luke xxi. 20, 21,) fled to Pella, and remained there for a season. It was to them like the ark to Noah's family, a place of refuge till the calamity was overpast.

* St. Luke xxi.

Digitized by Google

### Sect. 3.—*The persecution by Domitian.*

The emperor Domitian raised a new persecution in the year 94. Among the numerous martyrs who suffered, Timothy, the disciple of St. Paul, and bishop of Ephesus, was beaten with clubs in so dreadful a manner, that he expired two days after. Acilius Glabrio, who with Trajan had been consul the year before, was put to death. Flavia Domitilla, a lady of high rank, was banished to the island Pontia, and there put to death for the profession of Christianity. She is said, after a great deal of hard usage, to have been burnt, together with the house in which she lived.

---

## BOOK II.

### CHRISTIAN RECORDS RESPECTING THE SECOND CENTURY.

---

## CHAP. I.

### PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL.

### Sect. 1.—*The general diffusion of Christianity.*

Dreadful as the sufferings just mentioned were, we find that according to an ancient observation, "the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church." It was seed sown in the wide field of the world. For, in the second century, Pothinus, with Irenæus and others from Asia Minor, laboured so successfully in France

Digitized by Google

that churches were founded at Lyons and Vienne. By Tertullian it is related, that the Moors and Gætulians of Africa, several tribes inhabiting the borders of Spain, various provinces of France, parts of Britain inaccessible to the Romans, and also the Sarmatians, Daci, Germans, and Scythians received the Gospel in this age.

## Sect. 2.—*The introduction of Christianity into Britain.*

The introduction of the Gospel into Britain in the first century has been already mentioned; but a few further particulars will be interesting to the reader. Eusebius asserts, that "some of the Apostles passed over the ocean to those which are called the British Isles." Theodoret, among the nations converted by the Apostles, names the Britons; and says, "that St. Paul brought salvation to the isles that lie in the ocean," after he had mentioned Spain, and therefore in all probability the British islands are meant. Clemens Romanus says, that "St. Paul preached righteousness through the whole world, (he means probably the whole Roman empire,) and in so doing went to the utmost bounds of the west." This passage takes in Britain. Gildas, the earliest British historian, says, that the Gospel began to be published here about the time of the overthrow of the Britons, under Boadicea. (A. D. sixty or sixty-one.) His statement is supported by the Triads, ancient British records. From these Triads we learn, that Caractacus, who, after a war of nine years, in defence of the liberties of

Digitized by Google

his country, was basely betrayed to the Romans by Cartismandua, was, with his father Bran, and the whole family, carried captive to Rome, about the year fifty-two or fifty-three. At this time the Gospel was preached at Rome; and Bran, with others of the family, became converts. After about seven years, they had permission to return; and were the means of introducing the knowledge of Christ among their countrymen: on which account Bran was long distinguished as "one of the three blessed sovereigns," and his family as "one of the three holy lineages of Britain." Thus did the Lord make even afflictions "work together for good." The captivity of the princes became the means of spiritual freedom to them and their people. We find that some Christians from Rome accompanied the liberated captives. The names of three have been preserved. One was called Ilid, and is said to have been an Israelite; the other two were Cyndav and Arwystli, both of them probably Gentiles. They are supposed to have been all preachers; and are said to have been instrumental in turning great numbers of the Britons from the error of their ways. Their names are the more remarkable, as they were, if not the first, yet, doubtless, among the very first Christian preachers that ever set foot in this island. As Bran and Caractacus were princes of South Wales, we may conclude that Christianity made its way into Wales. When Bran returned to his native land, some of his family, it is thought, stayed behind at Rome. Of these, Claudia (mentioned in 2 Tim. iv. 21) is deemed one, and supposed to be the same Claudia, the wife

Digitized by Google

of Pudehs, mentioned by Martial the poet, who wrote in those times, and speaks of her as an accomplished and virtuous British lady.

Here it may be remarked, that Pomponia Græcina, the wife of Aulus Plautius, Claudius's lieutenant and the first Roman governor here, also appears to have been a British lady and a Christian. Of her, Tacitus says, "Pomponia Græcina, an illustrious lady, married to Plautius, was accused of having embraced a strange foreign superstition; and a trial for that crime was committed to her husband. He, according to ancient law and custom, convened her family and relations; and having in their presence tried her for her life and fame, pronounced her innocent of anything immoral." Pomponia lived many years after this trial; but always led "a gloomy melancholy kind of life" Tacitus, a heathen, deemed the lives of the primitive Christians gloomy and melancholy. The sobriety and severity of their lives (abstaining from Pagan rites and excesses as they did) appeared dismal dulness and austerity; for he did not know that "blessed are they that mourn" for their sins; that the Holy Spirit is their comforter even in this vale of tears; and that eternal joy awaits them hereafter.

Christianity having been introduced by Bran, another prince, named Lucius, afterwards patronized religion, established the see of Llandaff, it is said, in the second century, and having sent to Rome for missionaries, Fagan and Dovan came over to instruct his subjects. Before Christianity prevailed in Britain, the Druids, who were the idolatrous priests, worshipped the sun, and

Digitized by Google

sacrificed even men to their false gods. Some of their ancient temples even now remain, at Stonehenge and Abury in Wiltshire. Reader! be grateful to God that our idolatrous forefathers were so early blessed with christian knowledge. Be thankful that the light even now shines amongst us. Show your gratitude by cheerfully assisting with your prayers and your purses those christian societies which are now sending the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, to the ignorant and perishing heathen. Beware that an unfruitful knowledge of the Gospel does not become your own condemnation. What if the light that should lead you up to life eternal, should, through your continuance in sin, but show you the way to the dark chambers of the second death! How awful! Beware!

## CHAP. II.

### PERSECUTIONS OF THE CHURCH.

### SECT. 1.—*The persecution by Trajan.*

EARLY in the second century Trajan began another persecution. He gave orders to his officers to destroy the descendants of David; in consequence of which, all that could be found of that race were put to death. By Trajan's command Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, was sent to Rome to be devoured by wild beasts in the amphitheatre. Ignatius had boldly defended the faith of Christ before the emperor, for which he was cast into prison, and tormented. After being scourged, he was compelled to hold fire in his hands, and

Digitized by Google

papers dipped in oil were put to his sides, and set on fire. His flesh was then torn with red-hot pincers. Before he suffered martyrdom, he wrote to several churches to confirm them in the faith. In the epistle to the Ephesians, he observes, "Though I am in bonds for the name of Christ, I am not as yet perfect in Christ Jesus. *Now I begin to be a disciple.*" Surprising words! what deep humility! an aged bishop, the disciple of St. John, just going to martyrdom, says, *Now I begin to be a disciple.* What a lesson to Christians not to think highly of themselves or boast, but rather feel and acknowledge themselves "less than the least." Again he remarks, "It is better to be mute and a Christian, than to be talkative and no Christian." And again, in a letter to the Magnesians, he remarks, "It becomes us not only to be called, but to be Christians." In his letter to the Philadelphians, he said, "Children of the light, avoid wicked doctrines. Follow as sheep your pastor. If any do not preach Christ Jesus, they are to me funeral pillars and monuments of the dead, upon whom names only are inscribed." How ready he was to suffer for Christ's sake may be learnt from these words, "Let fire, cross, breaking my bones, quartering my members, crushing my body, or all the torments that men and devils can invent befall me, so that I may but enjoy my Lord Jesus. It were better for me to die for Christ Jesus, than to reign over the ends of the earth." When he came to Rome, he wrote to Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, to take into his charge the church of Antioch, till he could elect a fit person to be bishop in his



Digitized by Google

room; he thus proved himself to be, even in death, mindful of his flock. He was torn to pieces by wild beasts. He said, That "good and wicked men are like true and counterfeit money, the one seems to be good, and is not, the other both seems and is good:" and of grace he observed, "Grace flowing from the blessed Spirit of God makes the soul like a fountain, whose water is pure, wholesome, and clear."

### Sect. 2.—*The persecution by Adrian.*

Trajan being succeeded by Adrian, the latter continued the persecution with much severity. Alexander, bishop of Rome, and his two deacons, Zenon, a Roman nobleman, and many other Christians, suffered. In Mount Ararat many were crucified, crowned with thorns, and spears were run into their sides, in imitation of Christ's passion. Eustachius, a brave Roman commander, was ordered to join in an idolatrous sacrifice to celebrate some of his own victories; but his faith (being a Christian in his heart) was so much greater than his vanity, that he nobly refused it. Enraged at the denial, the ungrateful emperor forgot the service of this skilful commander, and ordered that he and his whole family should be martyred. At the martyrdom of Faustines and Jovita, brothers and citizens of Brescia, their torments were so many, and their patience so great, that Calocerius, a Pagan, exclaimed, "Great is the God of the Christians;" for which he was put death. After enduring great cruelties, the Christians were at last delivered from

Digitized by Google

persecution, Quadratus, bishop of Athens, having defended their cause, and persuaded the emperor to favour them. In Adrian's reign, a false prophet, a Jew, named Barchochabas, appeared, who tortured Christians and encouraged the Jews to rebel: but Adrian conquered the rebels. Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem, (the son of Cleophas,) had been crucified in Trajan's reign; and Clement, bishop of Rome, thrown, with an anchor about his neck, into the sea.

SECT. 3.—*The persecution by Marcus Aurelius.*

IN the year 162, the emperor Marcus Aurelius persecuted the Christians. Polycarp, a disciple of St. John and bishop of Smyrna, tried to escape from his persecutors, but was taken. Those who were to carry him before the proconsul, set him upon an ass, and so brought him to Smyrna. When he came before the proconsul, he demanded whether he was Polycarp of whom he had heard such complaints, but beckoned him to deny that he was the man; but when he would not deny, the proconsul urged him again, saying, "Blaspheme, and deny Christ, and thou shalt be safe." To which the good man replied, "Fourscore and six years have I served Christ, neither hath he ever wronged me at any time, and how then can I now deny my King and my Saviour?" The proconsul urged him to swear by the fortune of Cæsar. To which he replied, "That the Christian religion taught obedience to all governors, but to swear by Cæsar's fortune out of vainglory, he refused." Upon which, being threat-



Digitized by Google

ened with wild beasts, fire, and other torments, he stood resolute in his faith, saying, "You threaten me with fire, which shall last but an hour, and is quickly quenched; but your are ignorant of the everlasting fire at the day of judgment, and of those endless torments which are reserved for the wicked; but why do you delay? appoint me to what death you please." The proconsul hearing this was amazed at his courage, and commanded the crier to proclaim thrice, that Polycarp was a Christian. His enemies desired that he might be exposed to the flames. The holy man put off his apparel, being assisted by faithful Christians, who came to take their last farewell of him. The heathens offered to nail him to the stake, but he said, "Suffer me even as I am, for he that hath given me strength to come to this fire, will give me patience likewise to persevere therein, without your fastening me with nails." Upon this he put up prayers with great fervency, giving praise to God that he had been pleased to bring him to such a glorious end. In the midst of the fire he said this prayer: "O God, the Father of thy beloved Son Jesus Christ, through whom we have received the knowledge of thee; O God, the Creator of all things, upon thee I call; thee I confess to be the true God; thee I glorify; O Lord, receive me, and make me a partaker of the resurrection of thy saints, through the merits of our great high-priest, thy beloved Son Jesus Christ; to whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be honour and glory for ever. Amen."

Another eminent Christian was Justin Martyr,

Digitized by Google

a native of Samaria, who had been educated in the philosophy of the Gentile world. Whilst taking a walk by the sea-side, he providentially met an aged Christian. The stranger recommended him to read the writings of the prophets; unfolded to him the leading doctrines of Christianity; and concluded his discourse with this advice;—"Above all things, pray, that the gates of light may be opened to you: for these things cannot be discerned or understood by any one, except God and his Christ grant to a man the knowledge of them." That this divine illumination is necessary to enable any one properly to understand and relish real godliness, is declared in St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, ch. ii 14. "The natural man," says he, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Reader, does your soul thirst after spiritual knowledge, and is your mind at all perplexed and in doubt? then read the Bible with true prayer and meek dependence upon the teaching of the Holy Spirit. The venerable stranger immediately departed, and was never after seen by Justin. From that time he carefully read the Scriptures.—"I found," says he, "Christianity to have a formidable majesty in its nature, admirably adapted to terrify those who are in the way of transgression, as well as sweetness, peace, and serenity, for those who are conversant in it." The patience of Christians under persecution confirmed his faith. Justin wrote excellent works to defend the Christians against their enemies, who falsely



Digitized by Google

accused them. Crescens, a philosopher, who had been rebuked by Justin for his iniquities, procured his imprisonment, and shortly after his martyrdom, for being a Christian. When accused, Justin said for himself and his companions, "We desire nothing more sincerely than to endure tortures for our Lord Jesus Christ, and to be saved." The rest added, "We are Christians, and we cannot sacrifice to idols!" The governor then pronounced this sentence, "Let those men be first scourged, and then beheaded." The martyrs rejoiced and blessed God, and suffered. Justin used to say, "That which the soul is in the body, Christians are in the world: for as the soul is in, and not of the body, so Christians are in, but not of the world."

Persecution raged also in France, particularly at Lyons and Vienne. The principal of the martyrs were Vettius Agathus, a young nobleman, Blandina, a Christian lady, Attalus, of Pergamos, Pothinus, the venerable bishop of Lyons, who was ninety years of age, and Sanctus, deacon of Vienne; who, to every question respecting his name, his nation, his condition, replied, "I am a Christian, which is to me name, and place, and state, and every thing." Some of the martyrs of Lyons were compelled to sit in red-hot iron chairs. Others were sewed up in nets, and thrown on the horns of bulls. The martyrs of Lyons were forty-eight in number, in the year 177.

In the year 179, were put to death Epipodius and Alexander, celebrated for their great friendship; of whom the first was born at Lyons, and the latter in Greece. Epipodius, being pitied by

Digitized by Google

the governor of Lyons, and exhorted to join in pagan worship, replied, "Your tenderness is actual cruelty; and the agreeable life you describe is replete with everlasting death. Christ suffered for us, that our pleasures should be immortal, and hath prepared for his followers an eternity of bliss. The frame of man being composed of two parts, body and soul, the first, as mean and perishable, should be rendered subservient to the interests of the last. Your idolatrous feasts may gratify the mortal, but they injure the immortal part; that therefore cannot be enjoying life, which destroys the most valuable part of your frame. Your pleasures lead to eternal death, and our pains to perpetual happiness." Epipodius was put to the rack, upon which being stretched, his flesh was torn with iron hooks. Having borne his torments with unshaken fortitude, he was taken from the rack, and beheaded.

Reader, in the persecuted disciples of the two first centuries already mentioned, you behold living and fruitful branches of the true Vine. You see believers united to the Lord Jesus, and partakers of his spirit. You behold disciples faithful to their Saviour, and you find that their Saviour did not forsake them, and leave them comfortless like destitute orphans. He supported them to the last by the grace of his Holy Spirit.

Digitized by Google

# BOOK III.

CHRISTIAN RECORDS RESPECTING THE THIRD AND BEGINNING OF THE FOURTH CENTURY.

## CHAPTER I.

PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL.

In the third century, Origen, having been invited by an Arabian prince, converted a tribe of wandering Arabs to the Christian faith. The fierce nation of the Goths, who inhabited Mœsia and Thrace, and some tribes of Sarmatians, received the Gospel by means of bishops, who were either sent thither from Asia, or had become their captives. In France, by the labours of many pious men, especially Saturninus, the first bishop of Toulouse, churches were founded at Paris, Tours, Arles, Narbonne; and the knowledge of the Gospel spread, in a short time, throughout the whole country. Christianity also spread through part of Germany; and churches were founded at Cologne, Treves, and Metz. In these instances the Gospel was preached to barbarous people who could not read, but it was the remark of Irenæus, that "barbarous nations which believed in Jesus without paper or ink, (by hearing, not by reading,) had the doctrine of salvation written on their hearts by the Holy Ghost. Those (says he) who have received this faith *without*

Digitized by Google

*Scripture*, are barbarians as to their manner of speaking compared with us: but as to their sentiments and behaviour, they are very wise and acceptable to God."

## CHAPTER II.

### PERSECUTIONS OF THE CHURCH.

### SECT. 1.—*The persecution by Severus.*

THE emperor Severus, having been recovered from sickness by a Christian, at one time favoured the Christians; but the rage of the people prevailing, he permitted the disciples to be again persecuted. Victor, bishop of Rome, suffered; many of Origen's hearers, at Alexandria, also suffered. Marcella was burnt. Her daughter Rhais had boiled pitch poured on her head, and was then burnt. Potamiena, the sister of Rhais, was put to death in the same manner; but Basilides, an officer, who attended her to execution, was converted, and afterwards beheaded.

Irenæus, who was born in Asia Minor, went into France, where he was ordained a presbyter of the church at Lyons; and, though a great scholar, he learned a barbarous language, that he might teach his flock. After the martyrdom of Pothinus, he was made bishop of Lyons. Being taken, with several of his chief friends, they were led to the top of a hill, on which were placed crosses on one hand, and idols on the other; and they were put to their choice, either to embrace the idols and live, or be crucified; upon which

Digitized by Google

they joyfully chose the latter, and suffered martyrdom. Irenæus was always a great enemy to error. This pious bishop wrote thus to Florinus, who had embraced doctrines contrary to the Gospel. "These doctrines, those who walked with the apostles did not deliver to you; for I saw you when I was a boy in lower Asia, with Polycarp; and you were then, though a person of rank in the Emperor's service, desirous of being approved by him. The instructions of our childhood grow with our growth, and adhere to us most closely, so that I can describe the very spot in which Polycarp sat and expounded, the manner of his life, the figure of his body, the sermons which he preached to the multitude; how he related to us his converse with John and the rest of those who had seen the Lord, how he mentioned their particular expressions, what things he had heard from them of the Lord, of his miracles, of his doctrines. These things, through the mercy of God, I heard with seriousness; I wrote them not on paper, but on my heart; and ever since, through the grace of God, have a genuine remembrance of them, and can witness before God, that if that blessed Apostolic Presbyter had heard some of the doctrines which are now maintained, he would have cried out and stopped his ears, and in his usual manner have said, O good God! to what times hast thou reserved me!" How strongly do these words show the importance of cleaving with full purpose of heart to the true doctrines of God's holy word, and avoiding dangerous errors! And what a blessed example is Irenæus to young persons and chil-

Digitized by Google

dren! When a child, *he wrote upon his heart* the truths he heard from the holy bishop of Smyrna. In like manner, young readers, should you receive the word of God when faithfully preached; and if you have been religiously instructed at school, or by your parents, you should seriously and thankfully treasure up the truths you have been taught. Oh! do not let the cares of the world, or hurtful lusts, choke the precious seed that has been sown in your hearts. Just turn to Heb. xi. 1—3, and read the passage carefully. Are not these awful words?

Cecilia, a young lady in Rome, was married to a gentleman named Valerian. Her husband and brother, having become Christians through her means, were beheaded. The lady was placed in a scalding bath, and having continued there a considerable time, her head was struck off. Calixtus, bishop of Rome, died a martyr in 224; and Urban, bishop of Rome, in 232.

### Sect. 2.—*The persecution of Maximin.*

The persecution in 235 was in the reign of Maximin. In Cappadocia many suffered. The principal persons who perished under this reign, were Pontianus, Bishop of Rome; Anteros, a Grecian, his successor, who gave offence to the government, by collecting the acts of the martyrs: Pammachius and Quiritus, Roman senators, with their families: Hippolitus, a Christian Bishop, tied to a wild horse, and dragged till he expired. During this persecution, raised by Maximin, very many Christians were slain with-

Digitized by Google

out trial, and buried in heaps; sometimes fifty or sixty being cast into a pit together.

It was for wise reasons that the Almighty thus permitted the havoc of his people. He glorified his power and his mercy in sustaining the disciples, and received their departing spirits to their eternal rest. But doubtless these persecutions were often permitted in awful judgment; and though severe, yet, as lightning clears the air, so they purified the church; for about the middle of this century religion had greatly declined. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, complains bitterly of the worldly spirit of professors and pastors in his days in Africa. "They were brooding over the arts of increasing wealth. The pastors and the deacons forgot their duty; works of mercy were neglected; luxury prevailed; arts of dress were cultivated; fraud and deceit were practised among brethren; Christians united themselves in matrimony with unbelievers; and swore not only without reverence, but even without truth."

The persecution extended to Africa. At Carthage, Perpetua, a married lady of rank, of about twenty-two years, who had a child at the breast, sang hymns as she was going to suffer. Felicitas, a married lady, was delivered of her child in prison. Felicitas and Perpetua were thrown to a bull, which made his first attack upon Perpetua, and stunned her; he then darted at Felicitas, and gored her dreadfully; but not killing them, the executioner did that office with his sword. Tertullian, of Carthage, who had been converted by reading the Scriptures, did all

Digitized by Google

in his power to stop the persecution, by writing noble defences of the Gospel, and of the conduct of Christians.

### Sect. 3.—*The persecution by Decius.*

A persecution began under Decius, in 249. The martyrs were very numerous. Amongst others, Fabian, the bishop of Rome, was beheaded. Vincent, a martyr, said to a persecutor, "Do the worst that the spirit of malignity can set thee on to do, thou shalt see God's Spirit strengthen the tormented, more than Satan can do the tormentor." "Can any one (said Augustine respecting this martyr) be unmoved in the contemplation of this immovable martyr?—Vincent, indeed, that is, a conqueror." Peter, a young man, was beheaded for refusing to sacrifice to the heathen goddess Venus. He said, "I am astonished you should sacrifice to an infamous woman, whose debaucheries even your own historians record, and whose life consisted of such actions as your laws would punish.—No! I shall offer the true God the acceptable sacrifice of praises and prayers." The proconsul of Asia, on hearing this, ordered that the prisoner should be stretched upon a wheel, by which his bones were broken, and then he was beheaded. Nichomachus, when ordered to sacrifice to idols, replied, "I cannot pay that respect to devils, which is only due to the Almighty." After enduring torments for a time, he recanted; but scarcely had he given this proof of his weakness, than he fell into great



Digitized by Google

agonies, dropped down on the ground, and expired immediately. Denisa, a young woman of only sixteen years of age, who beheld this terrible judgment, exclaimed, "O unhappy man, why would you buy a moment's ease at the expense of a miserable eternity!" Optimus, hearing this, called to her, and Denisa, avowing herself a Christian, was beheaded.

Lucian and Marcian, though once magicians, became converts to Christianity, and preachers. The persecution raging at this time, they were carried before the governor of Bithynia, to whom they said, "That the laws of charity and humanity obliged all men to endeavour the conversion of their neighbours, and to do every thing in their power to rescue them from the snares of the devil." Marcian said, that "their conversion was by the same grace which was given to St. Paul, who, from a zealous persecutor of the church, became a preacher of the Gospel." Here it may be noticed, that though none should rashly become preachers, yet all Christians should endeavour to promote the salvation of their friends, relations, and neighbours, by good and gentle behaviour, by affectionate conversation, by lending pious books, and bringing them to public worship. Lucian and Marcian were burnt alive.

Agatha, a Sicilian lady, was so beautiful, that Quintin, governor of Sicily, made many attempts upon her virtue. On her confessing that she was a Christian, he determined to gratify his revenge, as he could not his passion. She was scourged, burnt with red hot-irons, and torn

Digitized by Google

with sharp hooks. Having borne these torments with admirable fortitude, she was next laid upon live coals, mingled with glass, and, being carried back to prison, she expired. Cyril, bishop of Gortyna, was seized by order of Lucius, the governor, who exhorted him to perform the sacrifices, and save his person from destruction. He was now eighty-four years of age. The good prelate replied, that, as he had long taught others to save their souls, he should only think now of his own salvation. He walked cheerfully to the place of execution.

Babylas became bishop of Antioch in 237. He governed the church with prudence during the most tempestuous times. The first calamity that happened to Antioch during his abode, was the siege by Sapor, king of Persia; who took and plundered this city amongst others, and used the Christian inhabitants with greater severity than the rest; but he was soon defeated by Gordian. In the reign of Decius, Babylas was committed to prison, and beheaded, with three young men who had been his pupils. Forty young women, at Antioch, after being imprisoned and scourged, were burnt. Theodora, a young lady of Antioch, on refusing to sacrifice to the Roman idols, was condemned to a house of ill-fame. Didymus, a Christian, disguised himself in the habit of a Roman soldier, went to the house, informed Theodora who he was, and assisted her to make her escape. This being effected, Didymus was taken before the president, to whom confessing the truth, the sentence of death was pronounced against him. Theodora,



Digitized by Google

hearing that her deliverer was likely to suffer, came to the judge, threw herself at his feet, and begged that the sentence might fall only on her as the guilty person; but, deaf to the cries of the innocent, the judge condemned both; when they were beheaded, and their bodies afterwards burnt.

Origen, the celebrated presbyter and catechist of Alexandria, was thrown into a loathsome prison, laden with fetters, and his legs were stretched to the utmost for several days. Having fallen into idolatry, his fall brought great distress of mind, and in a lamentation which he wrote, he uses the following words:—"A lofty turret, yet suddenly thrown to the ground: a fruitful tree, yet quickly withered: a burning light, yet forthwith darkened: a running fountain, yet dried up. Woe is me that ever I was decked with gifts and graces, and am now seen pitifully deprived of all. Pity me, O my friends, since I have now trodden under foot the seal of my profession, and joined in league with the devil. Pity me, O my friends, since I am rejected, and cast away from before the face of God. Where is that good Shepherd of souls? Where is he that went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and cured him that was wounded by thieves? Seek me out, O Lord, who am fallen from the higher Jerusalem, and who have broken the vow I made in baptism, &c. Assist me, O Holy Spirit, and give me grace to repent. I beseech thee, O Lord, call me back, since I tread a most destructive way. Grant me that good guide and instructor, the Holy Ghost, that I may not be-

Digitized by Google

come an habitation of devils; but that I may tread under foot the devil, that trod upon me, and overcoming his sleights, may be again restored to the joys of thy salvation. Lord, I fall down before thy mercy-seat; have mercy upon me, who mourn thus, because I have greatly offended. The assembly of the saints doth make intercession for me, who am an unprofitable servant. Show mercy, O Lord, to thy wandering sheep, who is subject to the ravenous wolf: save me, O Lord, out of his mouth. Let my sackcloth be rent asunder. Gird me with joy and gladness. Let me be received again into the joy of my God. Let me be thought worthy of his kingdom, through the earnest petitions of the church, which sorroweth over me, and humbleth herself to Jesus Christ in my behalf; to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be all glory and honour for ever and ever." *Amen.*—What a lesson of instruction have we here! "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." Origen afterwards wrote much to strengthen his fellow disciples, and died in peace at Tyre.

The school of Alexandria, in which Origen taught, was then and long afterwards a place of learning, in which great numbers were fitted for usefulness in the church of Christ, though it is to be lamented, that a mixture of heathen philosophy rather darkened than illustrated the simple doctrines of the Gospel. Upon the most important points, *the Bible is its own interpreter*. In the above school an eminent preacher, named Gregory Thaumaturgus, was brought up. He preached at Neo-Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, when



Digitized by Google

there were only seventeen Christians in that large city, and was afterwards bishop of the place. During the Decian persecution, he advised his flock to flee to places of safety, lest, in the hour of trial, they should fall from the faith. He went also himself to the mountains for a season. When near his death, he inquired if there were still any idolaters in the city? and was told there were seventeen. After such success in his ministry, we may well add, *What hath God wrought!* Gallus, the emperor, having concluded his wars, a plague broke out in the empire; sacrifices to the pagan deities were ordered, and persecution spread in all parts of the empire. Cornelius, bishop of Rome, and Lucius, his successor, fell martyrs.

SECT. 4.—*The persecution by Valerian.*

ANOTHER persecution began under Valerian, in 257, and continued for three years and six months. The most eminent martyrs were the following, though neither rank, sex, nor age, were regarded. Rufina and Secunda were two ladies of Rome. Rufina was designed in marriage for Armentarius; Secunda for Verinus, persons of rank. The suitors, at the time of the persecution, were both Christians; but when danger appeared, they renounced their faith to save their fortunes. They took great pains to persuade the ladies to do the same, but disappointed of their purpose, the lovers were base enough to inform against the ladies, who were brought before Donatus, governor of Rome,

Digitized by Google

where they sealed their profession with their blood. Stephen, bishop of Rome, was beheaded in the same year; and about that time Saturninus, the pious bishop of Thoulouse, refusing to sacrifice to idols, was fastened by the feet to the tail of a bull; when upon a signal given, the enraged animal was driven down the steps of the temple, and the martyr's brains were dashed out. Sextus succeeded Stephen as bishop of Rome. He is supposed to have been a Greek by birth. His singular wisdom and courage distinguished him upon many occasions. Marcianus procured an order from the emperor Valerian to put to death all the Christian clergy in Rome, and hence the bishop, with six of his deacons, suffered martyrdom in 258. Laurentius was the principal of the deacons. The persecutors commanded him to give an account to the emperor of the church treasures. This he promised to do in three days, during which he collected a great number of aged, helpless poor; he then went to the magistrate, and presenting them, said, "These are the true treasures of the church." He was then beaten with iron rods, set upon a wooden horse, and had his limbs dislocated; and was fastened on a gridiron, with a slow fire under it, that his death might be the more lingering. His constancy during these trials, and the serenity of his countenance while under torments, gave the spectators a proof of the value of the Christian religion: many became converts.

In Africa, the persecution raged with peculiar violence. Thousands received the crown of

Digitized by Google

martyrdom, and amongst others, Cyprian, bishop of Carthage. Cœcilius, a Christian minister of Carthage, became the happy instrument of Cyprian's conversion, before which he was an idolater, and had studied magic. Previous to his baptism, he studied the Scriptures with care, and being struck with the truths they contained, he determined to practise the virtues therein recommended. After his baptism, he sold his estate, and distributed the money among the poor. He was soon after made a presbyter, and, being admired for his virtues and his works, on the death of Donatus, he was elected bishop of Carthage. Cyprian's care not only extended over Carthage, but to the churches of Numidia and Mauritania. In the year 250, Cyprian was publicly proscribed by the emperor Decius, and the cry of the Pagans was, "Cyprian to the lions." The bishop, however, withdrew from the rage of the populace, and during his retirement wrote thirty pious letters to his flock. The rigour of the persecution abating, he returned to Carthage. A plague breaking out, it was, as usual, laid to the charge of the Christians, and the magistrates began to persecute. In the year 257, Cyprian was banished: afterwards he returned to Carthage, but was carried before the governor, who condemned him to be beheaded, in the following year. It was the remark of Cyprian that these twelve absurdities were sometimes seen, viz. "A wise man without good works, an old man without religion, a young man without obedience, a rich man without alms, a woman without shamefacedness, a guide without

Digitized by Google

virtue, a contentious Christian, a poor man that is proud, a king that is unjust, a bishop that is negligent, people without discipline, subjects without law." The churches of Carthage and Rome were troubled with an unhappy schism. Novatus, at Carthage, and Novatian, at Rome, were unwilling ever to receive into the communion of the church, those Christians who were not steadfast during the persecutions. Novatian set up himself, in opposition to his bishop, Cornelius, who was banished for the truth, and Novatian died a martyr, during Valerian's persecution. Those who differed upon earth, were afterwards united, we may hope, in that heavenly world where there is no error or sin. Many African bishops and others were sent to work at the mines.

At Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, a child named Cyril was persecuted by children, and driven by his father out of the house. The judge said to him, "My child, I will pardon your faults, and your father shall receive you again. It is in your power to enjoy your father's estate, provided you are wise and take care of your own interest." "I rejoice to bear reproach," said the child, "God will receive me; I am not sorry that I am driven out of our house, I shall have a better mansion; I fear not death, because it will introduce me into a better life." He was then led away to martyrdom. "Your fire and your sword I don't regard," said he, "I go to a better house, I go to more excellent riches; despatch me presently, that I may enjoy them." Those who saw him wept. "You should rather

Digitized by Google

rejoice," said he, "you know not what a city I am going to inhabit, nor what is my hope." The people were astonished at the constancy of the young martyr. O reader, young reader especially, if this child could die for his Saviour's glory, should you not live to the glory of the Redeemer? Should not you remember that you are not your own, but bought with a price, and should glorify God with your body and spirit, which are God's? When two men, condemned for being Christians, came to suffer, Nicephorus, who had formerly injured Sapricius, humbly begged forgiveness, and by God's grace died a faithful martyr. Sapricius, who would not forgive him, denied the faith, and became an apostate.

At Utica, many Christians were placed round a burning lime-kiln. A pan of coals and incense being prepared, they were required either to sacrifice to Jupiter, or to be thrown into the kiln. On refusing they were suffocated. Fructuosus, bishop of Tarragona, in Spain, and his two deacons, Augurius and Eulogius, were burnt for being Christians. Alexander, Malchus, and Priscus, three Christians of Palestine, with a woman, were devoured by tigers. Maxima, Donatilla, and Secunda, three young women of Tuburga, had gall and vinegar given them to drink, were then scourged, tormented on a gibbet, rubbed with lime, scorched on a gridiron, and at length beheaded.

It is here proper to notice the miserable end of the emperor Valerian, who had so long persecuted the Christians. He was taken prisoner by

Digitized by Google

Sapor, king of Persia, who made him kneel as the meanest slave, and trod upon him when he mounted his horse. After having kept him for seven years in slavery, he caused his eyes to be put out, though he was then 83 years of age. He soon after ordered that his body should be flayed alive, and rubbed with salt, under which torments he expired.

### Sect. 5.—*The persecution by Aurelian.*

In the year 270, Anthony, an Egyptian, founded monasteries; Paul, of Thebes, introduced also the hermitical life: Christians, in times of persecution, thus fleeing to deserts, and living retired from the world. Under the emperor Aurelian, in the year 274, Felix, bishop of Rome, was beheaded. Agapetus, a young gentleman, who sold his estate, and gave the money to the poor, was beheaded at Prænestе, a city near Rome. At Smyrna, a presbyter named Pionius, Sabina, and Asclepiades, suffered. In the market-place, Pionius began to speak,—"Citizens of Smyrna, who please yourselves with the beauty of your walls and city, hear me speak a few words. For my own part, I would rather die, or undergo any sufferings, than contradict my conscience in religious concerns. Whence proceed those cruel scoffs of the Jews? What harm have we done them? What have *we* made *them* to suffer? Whom have we persecuted with unjust hatred?" He then addressed the Jews on the ground of their own scriptures, and solemnly described to the Pagans the day of judgment. The people

Digitized by Google

said, "Believe us, Pionius, your probity and wisdom make us deem you worthy to live, and life is pleasant." "I own, said the martyr, life is pleasant, but I mean that eternal life which I desire. I do not reject the good things of this life, but I prefer something which is infinitely better." The well-known sincerity and virtues of the man seem to have filled the people with veneration, and his enemies began to fear an uproar in his favour. "It is impossible to persuade you, then," said one of them. "I would to God I could, (says Pionius) persuade you to be a Christian." Sabina was his sister: she and Asclepiades confessed that they worshipped the Trinity in Unity. The captain of the horse came to the prison, and ordered Pionius to go to the idol temple. A cord was put about his neck, and he was dragged there with Sabina, exclaiming, "We are Christians." A judge (Lepidus) asked, "What God do you adore?" "Him," said Pionius, "that made heaven and earth." You mean him that was crucified? "I mean him whom God the Father sent for the salvation of men." A few days afterwards, the martyr thanked God as he went to execution, that he had been preserved from idolatry. He was nailed to the wood. The executioner said, "Change your mind, and the nails shall be taken out." "I have felt them," said he, "I hasten, O Lord, to be a partaker of the resurrection." The fuel was heaped, and whilst the fire consumed him, he prayed earnestly. His last words were,—"Lord, receive my spirit."

Digitized by Google

## Sect. 6.—*The persecution by Diocletian.*

Another persecution arose when Diocletian and Maximian reigned. Marcus and Marcellian were twins, natives of Rome, and of noble descent. Their parents were heathens, but the tutors, to whom the education of the children was intrusted, brought them up as Christians. They were martyred by being tied to posts, and having their feet pierced with nails. After a day and night, their sufferings were put an end to by thrusting lances through their bodies. Zoe, the wife of the gaoler, who had the care of these martyrs, being converted, was hanged upon a tree, with a fire of straw lighted under her; and her body, when taken down, was thrown into a river.

Tradition relates, that Maximian treated with great cruelty a Thebæan legion, for refusing to join in an idolatrous sacrifice, at St. Maurice in Savoy, when marching to France.

Alban, from whom St. Alban's, in Hertfordshire, received its name, was a British martyr. He was scourged, and then beheaded, in 287. Quintin, of Rome, with Lucian, preached at Amiens, in France; after which Lucian went to Beauvais, where he was martyred. Quintin remained in Picardy, but being seized as a Christian, he was tortured, and died in prison.

Another tempest arose soon after, in which many made shipwreck of their faith; but in which many others, having the Christian hope as an anchor of the soul, continued steadfast and im-



Digitized by Google

movable. The hatred of Galerius, the adopted son of Diocletian, was excited by his mother, a bigoted Pagan, and he persuaded the emperor to enter upon the persecution. In the year 303, it began in Nicomedia; a great number of officers went to the church of the Christians, where they seized upon all the sacred books, and committed them to the flames, in the presence of Diocletian and Galerius, who had the church levelled with the ground. This was followed by commanding the destruction of all other Christian churches and books. Galerius even had the palace set on fire, that the Christians might be charged with destroying it, and then punished. Many houses were set on fire, and whole Christian families perished in the flames; others had stones fastened about the neck, and being tied together, were drowned in the sea. Racks, scourges, swords, daggers, crosses, poison, and famine, were made use of to destroy Christians. A city of Phrygia, consisting entirely of Christians, was burnt, and the inhabitants perished in the flames.

The most remarkable persons who laid down their lives in this persecution, were the following. Sebastian, born at Narbonne, in France, and instructed in the principles of Christianity at Milan, became an officer of the emperor's guard at Rome. He remained a true Christian in the midst of idolatry, the splendour of a court, and evil examples. He was shot with arrows. Some pious Christians coming, in order to give his body burial, perceived signs of life, in a short time effected his recovery, and prepared him for a second martyrdom; for, as soon as he was able to go

Digitized by Google

out, he placed himself in the emperor's way, as he was going to the temple, and reproved him for his cruelties and prejudices against Christianity. By Diocletian's order, Sebastian was seized and beaten to death. Vitus, a Sicilian of rank, was a Christian. His father Hylas, who was a Pagan, finding that he had been instructed in Christianity by his nurse, used all his endeavours to bring him back to Paganism, and at length sacrificed his son to the idols. Victor was a Christian, at Marseilles, in France; he spent a great part of the night in visiting the afflicted, and confirming the weak; which pious work he could not safely perform in the day-time; and his fortune he spent in relieving the distresses of poor Christians. He was at length seized and dragged through the streets. A small altar was brought, and he was commanded to offer incense upon it: he stepped forward, and with his foot overthrew both altar and idol. This so enraged the emperor Maximian, that he ordered that the foot with which he kicked the altar should be cut off; and Victor was thrown into a mill, and crushed to pieces by the stones. Maximus, governor of Cilicia, being at Tarsus, three Christians, whose names were Tarachus, Probus, and Andronicus, were brought to the amphitheatre, and several beasts were let loose upon them.

When Galerius invaded Antioch, to force the Christians to renounce their pure religion, Romanus, a man of noble family, and deacon of the church of Cæsarea, ran to the Christians, at that time met together, and declared that the wolves were at hand, who would devour the Christian



Digitized by Google

flock; "but fear not, said he, neither let this peril disturb you." Romanus so encouraged them, that they even wished to die for the name of Christ. When scourged, Romanus sung psalms, requesting them not to favour him on account of his noble birth. "It is not my ancestry," said he, "but my Christian profession makes me noble." He proclaimed the living God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, his well-beloved Son, and eternal life through faith in his blood; and the abomination of idolatry, &c. Upon this his face was buffetted, and other tortures were inflicted. When the captain, blaspheming, said, 'Thy crucified Christ is but a yesterday's God; the gods of the Gentiles are the most ancient;' Romanus desired the captain to hear what a child of seven years of age would say. His request being granted, "Tell me, my child," said Romanus, "do you think it reasonable that we should worship many gods?" The child answered, 'That whatever men affirm to be God, must be one; and that Christ is the true God. That there are many gods, even we children cannot believe.' The captain commanded that the child should be scourged. The mother of the child said to her child, when asking for a draught of cold water, "Thirst, my child, after the cup, that the infants of Bethlehem once drank of." She desired him to remember, that Isaac, who beheld the knife wherewith, and the altar whereupon he should be sacrificed, willingly offered himself. The tormentor cruelly treated the child on its head. The mother cried, 'Suffer, my child; thou shalt go to Him, who will adorn

Digitized by Google

thy head with a crown of eternal glory.' When the tormentor required the child of the mother, who had taken it up in her arms, she, kissing it, said, 'Farewell, my sweet child:' and as the hangman was cutting off its head, she said, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Eusebius says, that Romanus, with great constancy, endured other tortures, and was strangled in prison, in the year 306.

Susanna, the niece of Caius, bishop of Rome, was pressed by the emperor Diocletian to marry a noble Pagan, who was nearly related to him. Refusing the honour, she was beheaded. Dorotheus, chamberlain to Diocletian, was a Christian, who took great pains to make converts. In his religious labours, he was joined by Gorgonius, another Christian, belonging to the palace. They were tortured and strangled. Peter, a servant to the emperor, was a Christian of singular humility. He was burnt over a slow fire. Lucian, a presbyter of Antioch, who was careful in correcting copies of the Bible, having read a defence of Christianity before the governor, in Nicodemia, was put to death.

Eulalia, a Spanish lady, being apprehended as a Christian, the magistrate attempted to bring her over to Paganism; but she so ridiculed the Pagan deities, that the judge had her tortured in a very cruel manner, till she expired. By order of Dacian, the governor of Tarragona, in Spain, Valerius the bishop, and Vincent the deacon, were imprisoned. Valerius was banished; and Vincent was racked, then confined in a dark dungeon, strewed with sharp flints and pieces of broken



Digitized by Google

glass, where he died. Indeed, so severe was the persecution in Spain, in the reign of Diocletian, that two triumphal pillars were set up as monuments of the *destruction* (as the Pagans imagined) of Christianity.

Saturninus, a priest of Albitina, a town of Africa, and his four children, after being tortured, were starved to death. Dativus, a Roman senator, Victoria, a young lady of fortune, with some others, all hearers of Saturninus, were tortured and starved. Agape, Chionia, and Irene, three sisters, were seized at Thessalonica, and burnt to death. Marcellinus, bishop of Rome, having opposed paying divine honours to Diocletian, suffered martyrdom by a variety of tortures; yet animated, till he expired, with the prospect of a glorious reward. Victorius, Carpophorus, Severus, and Severianus, were brothers, and all employed in places of honour in Rome. Having exclaimed against the worship of idols, they were beaten to death.

Timothy, a deacon of Mauritania, and Maura his wife, had not been united above three weeks, before they were separated by persecution. Timothy was carried before the governor of Thebais, in Egypt, who commanded him to deliver the Scriptures to be burnt. He answered, "Had I children, I would sooner deliver them to be sacrificed, than part with the word of God." The governor commanded that his eyes should be put out, saying; 'The books shall at least be useless to you, for you shall not see to read them.' His patience was so great, that the governor grew more enraged; he therefore ordered that he should

Digitized by Google

he hung up by the feet, with a weight about his neck, and a gag in his mouth. In this state, Maura, his wife, urged him for her sake to give up religion; but instead of consenting to his wife's entreaties, as soon as the gag was taken away, he blamed her mistaken love, and declared his resolution of dying for the faith. Maura resolved to imitate his courage and fidelity, and either to accompany or follow him to glory. After this, Timothy and Maura were crucified near each other.

Phileas, a bishop in Thebais, was a martyr. Philonomus, of Alexandria, a rich and eloquent man, died cheerfully in his Saviour's cause. From thirty to eighty persons were martyred daily. Theodosia, a young lady of Tyre, not eighteen years of age, was put to death for favouring Christian prisoners. At Gaza, some were deprived of an eye, or a limb, for meeting to hear the Scriptures read. One hundred and thirty men of rank, in Egypt, were deprived of an eye, and sent to the mines of Palestine. Sabinus, bishop of Assisium, refusing to sacrifice to Jupiter, and pushing the idol from him, had his hand cut off, by order of the governor of Tuscany. Soon after, Sabinus was scourged to death.

The emperor Diocletian at length resigned the cares of the state to Constantius and Galerius, the former a prince of mild disposition, the latter remarkable for cruelty: Galerius ruling in the east, and Constantius in the west. Such as resided in the east felt all the miseries of oppression; but Constantius spared Christians, though he destroyed churches, in France and Britain. Among



Digitized by Google

the many martyred by order of Galerius, were the following. Catharina, a lady of Alexandria, of great learning, was, for boldly confessing Christ, put to death. Julitta, a Christian lady, said, when condemned to death, "Farewell riches, and welcome poverty; farewell life, and welcome death. All that I have, if it were a thousand times more, would I rather lose, than speak one wicked and blasphemous word against God my Creator. I yield thee most hearty thanks, O my God, for this grace, that I can despise this transitory world, esteeming my Christian profession above all treasures." At the stake, she said to the women around her, "O sisters, labour after true piety. Be tired of a life led in darkness, and honour Christ, my God, my Redeemer, my Comforter, who is the true light of the world. Persuade yourselves, or rather the Spirit of the living God persuade you, that there is a world to come, wherein the worshippers of idols shall be tormented perpetually, and the servants of the High God be eternally crowned."

Eustratius, secretary to the governor of Armenia, was thrown into a fiery furnace, for exhorting some Christians to persevere in their faith. In the kingdom of Naples, several martyrdoms also took place. Quirinus, bishop of Siscia, was sent to the governor of Pannonia, (now Hungary,) who loaded him with chains, and took him through the principal towns of the Danube, exposing him to ridicule. Arriving at Sabaria, and finding that Quirinus would not renounce his faith, the martyr was thrown into a river, with a stone about his neck. Pamphilus, a native of Phœnicia, of high

Digitized by Google

family and extensive learning, was a minister at Cæsarea, where he established a public library, and spent his time in the practice of Christian virtue. Assisted by Eusebius, he gave a correct copy of the Old Testament, which had suffered greatly from the negligence of former transcribers. In the year 307, he suffered martyrdom. Marcellus, bishop of Rome, being banished on account of his faith, fell a martyr to the miseries he suffered in exile.

In the year 311, Galerius, who had been so great a persecutor, was devoured by worms, at Sardis. He suffered a whole year, and, just before his death, ordered that the Christians should be set at liberty, and he begged their prayers for his health. The liberated Christians returning to their friends, sang hymns on the way home: but after Galerius's death, Maximin continued this great persecution. Peter, bishop of Alexandria, was martyred. Agnes, a child of only thirteen years of age, was beheaded: as was Serene, the empress of Diocletian.

The above dreadful persecution lasted ten years, from the year 303 to 313; but the Almighty had mercifully designed a deliverance for his oppressed church, by the hands of Constantine the Great, the son of Constantius.—Historians relate, that Constantine saw in the sky the figure of a cross, with these words, "Through this, conquer," and resolved to become a Christian himself. The prophecy in Rev. vi. 12—17. is considered to relate to Constantine's success over the Heathen emperors, and the overthrow of idolatry; for, having raised an army of 30,000

Digitized by Google

foot, and 8000 horse, he marched from France towards Rome, against Maxentius, the emperor; defeated him, entered the city in triumph, and published a law in favour of the Christians. The tyrant Maximin, at length, put an end to his life by poison: and Licinius having afterwards persecuted the Christians, Constantine marched against him, and he was slain by his own soldiers.

Thus have we seen the church of Christ, during three centuries, almost constantly suffering. We may well wonder, as Moses did, when he saw the burning bush in Horeb; for the church, like that bush, still remained unconsumed: and that, because God was in the midst of her. Christian reader, praise your merciful God and Saviour, who, in faithfulness and love, thus supported by his Holy Spirit's influence his afflicted people. Will you doubt his readiness to support you also, in all your trials? Remember that he is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." The Redeemer, who sympathized with his disciples in former ages, is also "touched with the feeling of your infirmities." For your comfort, reflect that your trials and sufferings here, will be followed by "an exceeding and eternal weight of glory." You have seen the martyrs in this last and most severe of the Heathen persecutions, persecuted during ten years. Now turn to Rev. vii. 13—17. There see St. John's description of the same martyrs, as members of the church triumphant. Were they mourners? Were they imprisoned, starved, scorched by the heat of the persecution? Behold their tears wiped away, their souls par-

Digitized by Google

takers of a fulness of joy, and every desire satisfied by him, in whose service they died, even the Lamb in the midst of the throne. Every humble, penitent, and obedient follower of the Lamb, shall, without doubt, be numbered with those saints in glory everlasting.

---

## BOOK IV.

### RECORDS RESPECTING THE VIRTUES AND RELIGIOUS CUSTOMS OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS.

HITHERTO the reader has seen records chiefly relating to the progress of the Gospel, and the consequent sufferings of Christ's disciples. Arnobius, a Heathen philosopher, who became a Christian, speaking of the power which the Christian faith had over the minds of men, says, "Who would not believe it, when he sees in how short a time it has conquered so great a part of the world; when men of great knowledge, orators, grammarians, rhetoricians, lawyers, physicians, and philosophers, have thrown up those former opinions which but a little before they held, and have embraced the doctrines of the Gospel?" "Though but of yesterday, (said Tertullian,) yet have we filled your cities, islands, castles, corporations, councils, your armies themselves, your tribes, companies, the palace, the senate, and the courts of justice; only your temples have we left you free." Even reproach and persecution could not prevent this success. "Though (said Justin Martyr to Trypho, a Jew) our heads be exposed

Digitized by Google

to swords and axes, our bodies fastened to the cross, though thrown to wild beasts, harassed with chains, fire, and other instruments of torment, yet do we not start from our profession; nay, the more these things happen to us the faster others flock over to the name of Jesus, and become pious and devout followers of Christ, it being with us in this case as with the vine, which, being pruned and trimmed, brings forth more fruitful branches." So also Tertullian told the enemies of Christians—"By every act of cruelty, they did but tempt others to come over to the party; the oftener they were mowed down, the faster they sprang up again, the blood of Christians making the church's soil more fertile." Since then the Gospel made so surprising a progress during the first 300 years, without the force of arms or any sinful arts to promote it, we have full and clear proof that it had "God for its author, (therefore, truth without error for its matter,) as well as salvation for its end." Christianity prevailed, because it was a remedy that suited the state of fallen men, who stood in need of recovery; because its disciples adorned the doctrine in their lives, and because the Holy Spirit accompanied it with his grace and spiritual influence upon men's hearts. It has been just observed, that the primitive Christians adorned the doctrine of God their Saviour. Indeed they did so in an eminent degree, and in many ways. It is true there were great numbers of teachers and professors of false doctrine, (some even as early as the time of the Apostles,) who called themselves Christians; there were other sincere

Digitized by Google

but weak believers, who did not always walk uprightly, and for a season, especially in severe persecutions, departed from the faith; and even the best, like Christians in every age, had reason daily to lament their "sins, negligences, and ignorances;" yet, by the grace of God's Holy Spirit, they practised so many virtues, that even the Heathens could not but behold "the beauty of holiness." It may be useful here to mention some of those virtues by which God was glorified, and which believers, in all ages and countries, should imitate.

## CHAPTER I.

### VIRTUES OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS.

#### SECT. 1.—*Loyalty.*

THE primitive Christians were very loyal subjects. "The Christians (says Justin Martyr) obey the laws that are made, and by the exactness of their lives, go beyond that accuracy which the law requires of them." Polycarp, a little before his martyrdom, wrote to the Christians at Philippi, exhorting them to obey their rulers, and to exercise all patience and long-suffering towards them. And when he stood before the Proconsul, he told him, that this was "the great law of Christianity, that we are commanded by God to give all due honour and obedience to princes." Tertullian tells us, that it was a solemn part of the church service in his time, to pray for the princes under whom they lived: "We pray



Digitized by Google

(says he) for the emperors, for the grandees and ministers of state, for the prosperity of the age, for the quietness of affairs, for the continuance of their lives and government; that God would give them a long life, a secure reign, an undisturbed house, powerful armies, faithful senators, honest subjects, a quiet people, and, indeed, whatever they can wish for, either as men or emperors." "For your taxes and tributes (says Justin Martyr to the emperors) we are above all other men every where ready to bring them in to your collectors and officers, being taught so to do by our great master, who bade those that asked the question whether they might pay tribute unto Cæsar, to give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

## Sect. 2.—*Honesty.*

The primitive Christians were very just and honest in their dealings. "You look upon us (says Tertullian) as sacrilegious persons, and yet never found any of us guilty of wrong or injury, of any rapine and violence, much less of sacrilege and impiety. No, they are your own party, that swear by and worship your gods, and yet rob their temples. When we are burnt and most severely dealt with, it is for the greatest innocency, honesty, justice, modesty, for our truth and faithfulness, and our piety to the living God." Even Pliny, who was a Heathen, being commanded by the emperor Trajan to give him an account of the Christians, tells him, he "found this to be the greatest fault that they were guilty of, that they

Digitized by Google

used to meet to sing hymns to Christ, as God, and at those meetings to bind themselves by a sacrament, or an oath, that they would not do any wickedness; that they might be firmly obliged not to commit theft, robberies, adulteries; not to falsify their words, or to deny any thing where-with they were intrusted, when it was required of them."[z]

## Sect. 3.—*Purity.*

The primitive Christians anxiously aimed at purity of heart and life. "We who before (says Justin Martyr, speaking of the converting power of the Christian doctrine) did please ourselves in fornication and uncleanness, do now solely embrace temperance and chastity: what an innumerable company I could name, of those who have left their luxury and intemperance, and come over to this kind of life." They even chose to undergo the greatest dangers, and to die, rather than commit sins of impurity. As the fairest promises could not tempt them, so neither could the fiercest torments affright them. When Maximin, the emperor, governed in the east, amongst other effects of his fury, he filled all places where he came with adulteries, "which succeeded well enough, says the historian, with all others, except Christians, who generously despising death, made light of the rage of the tyrant." The women rather submitted their lives to death, than their bodies to dishonour. Of these he mentions one especially at Alexandria, of great birth and fortune, but much more famous for her virtues.



Digitized by Google

The emperor had often attempted all arts in vain; till at last, not being able to prevail, he would not put her to death, which she was most ready to undergo, but despoiled her of her estate, and then sent her into banishment. Many hundreds of others, at the same time, subjected themselves to all kinds of tortures, rather than commit sin. A martyr, at one time, was placed in a garden near a rivulet, bound with silk cords, and an exceedingly wicked woman was placed near to him, to suggest sinful thoughts: he bit off his tongue that the pain might keep him from cherishing such thoughts. How should such records convince us of the evil of sin! To avoid which, as you value present peace and eternal life, reader, keep out of the way of dangerous company and dangerous places. Have no confidence in yourself, but be jealous over your own heart; resist at the very beginning all unholy desires, and rely upon the promised grace of God, that sin may not have dominion over you.

## Sect. 4.—*Humility.*

Humility is another grace in which the primitive Christians excelled, and which their ministers enforced. In dress and other such things, the primitive Christians avoided whatever looked like, or promoted an approach to pride. Yet they avoided both singularity on the one hand, and excess on the other, generally conforming themselves to the decent customs of the times and places where they lived. Justin Martyr, giving his friend an account of the Christians, tells him,

Digitized by Google

that "they differed not from other men either in their country or speech, or the customs of civil life; dwelling partly amongst Greeks, partly in barbarous cities, as every one's lot is fallen, they follow the customs of their country; and both in clothes and diet, and all other affairs of outward life, show the excellent constitution of their discipline and conversation." Nazianzen reports of his father, who was a bishop, that amongst other virtues, he was remarkable for humility, and that "his humility consisted not in his dress, but in the temper of his mind; not in hanging down his head, or in the softness of his tone, or the demureness of his look, or the manner of his walk, but in the frame and temper of his soul. Both in his garb and diet he equally avoided pomp and sordidness, and though a great restrainer of his appetite, would yet seem not to do it, lest he should be thought plainly to design glory to himself by being needlessly different from other men." Justin Martyr refused his adversary's praise of the acuteness and elegance of his reasonings, ascribing all to the grace of God, that enabled him to understand and expound the Scriptures.

The confessors of the churches of Vienne and Lyons, in France, although they had often borne witness to the truth, though they had been thrown to wild beasts, exposed to the fire, and the remains of wounds were visible in their bodies; yet, in imitation of the great humility of the Son of God, they would not, after all this, call themselves martyrs, or suffer others to call them so: but if any of the brethren, either by letter or discourse, had saluted them by that title, they would



Digitized by Google

reprove them for it; acknowledging themselves at best but confessors, and with tears begging of the brethren to be instant with God by prayer that they might perfect all by a real martyrdom. When Julian, the apostate, refused to proceed against the Christians by open persecution, because he envied them the honour of being martyrs, Nazianzen answers, that "he was mistaken if he supposed they suffered all this, rather out of a desire of glory, than a love of truth: such a foolish and vain-glorious humour might indeed be found amongst his philosophers, and the best of his party, many of whom had made strange attempts to gain the honour of a great name. But as for Christians, they had rather die in the cause of religion, although no man should ever know of it, than live and flourish amongst others with the greatest honours."

When some in Cyprian's time had made a noble confession of Christ in the greatest danger, lest they should be exalted above measure in their own thoughts, he bids them to be "humble, and modest, and quiet, that they might preserve the honour of their name, and be as glorious in their actions as they had been in their words and confessions of Christ; adding that they should imitate their Lord, who was not proud, but humble at the time of his passion, washing his Apostles' feet: and follow the pattern of St. Paul, who, in his greatest sufferings, continued meek and humble, and did not arrogate any thing to himself, no, not after he had been honoured with a translation into Paradise." Cyprian was himself eminent for humility. When the people had chosen him

Digitized by Google

bishop, he privately withdrew, reckoning himself unworthy of so great an office, and giving way to others, whose age and experience rendered them, as he thought, much fitter for it; but the people, having found where he was, beset the house, and forced the office upon him.

### Sect. 5.—*Heavenly-mindedness.*

As the primitive Christians were humble; so also were they heavenly-minded. Their treasure was in heaven, and their hearts were there also. Hence they avoided those pleasures which appeared to them sinful. Observe what a Heathen, in Minucius Felix, says to Christians, "The Romans enjoy the world, but you visit not the shows, nor are you present at the pomps, nor do you go to the public feasts; you abhor the games, the sacrificial meats and drinks; you do not crown your heads with garlands, nor perfume your bodies with sweet odours." Octavius, the Christian, grants this to be true, and tells him "there was very good reason why they should abstain from their shows, pomps, and diversions, at which they could not be present without great sin and shame. Indeed, they reckoned themselves obliged to this by what they had vowed at their baptism, when they solemnly engaged to renounce the devil and all his works, pomps, and pleasures," that is, says St. Cyril, "the sights and sports of the theatre, and such like vanities." The truth is, they looked upon the public sports and pastimes of those days as the scenes, not only of folly and lewdness, but of great impiety and

Digitized by Google

idolatry; as places where the devil ruled, and reckoned all his votaries that came thither. It was by thus living above the world that they were enabled to endure afflictions. The hope of heavenly joys supported them. They knew that the more haste their enemies made to break open the cage of their bodies, the sooner their souls would be at liberty to fly to immortality. And, indeed, so much were their thoughts fixed upon, and so oft did they use to comfort one another by discoursing of that kingdom which they expected hereafter, that some of their enemies, over-hearing and mistaking them, accused them of treason, whereas they were speaking of a heavenly, not an earthly kingdom. It would be well if some Christians, who meddle too much with worldly politics, and sometimes even speak evil of dignities, would imitate the first Christians.

We may see how greatly the hope of heaven supported those believers, by what Basil says of forty martyrs that suffered at Sebastia, in Armenia, in the reign of Licinius. When the governor obliged them to stand all night in the depth of winter, in a pond of water, they comforted one another, by balancing their present hardships with their future hopes: "Is the weather sharp? (said they) Paradise is a place of comfort and delight. Is the frost cold and bitter? the rest that remains is sweet and pleasant; let us but hold out a little, and Abraham's bosom will refresh us; we shall change this one night for an eternal age of happiness. How many of our fellow soldiers have lost their lives to keep loyal to their temporal prince? and should we be unfaithful to the King of

Digitized by Google

heaven? How many have justly died for their crimes; and shall we refuse to die in the cause of righteousness? It is but the flesh that suffers, let us not spare it; since we must die, let us die that we may live." When their commander set upon them both with threatenings and promises, assuring them, that "if they would but deny Christ, they should make their own terms for riches and honour:" they told him "they could not close with his offers, without being infinitely losers by the bargain; that it was to no purpose to offer a little of the world to them, who despised the whole of it; and that all these advantages were nothing to what they had in hope and expectation."

## Sect. 6.—*Brotherly love.*

Another grace in which the primitive Christians were eminent, was brotherly love. In those first and best ages of religion, the love and charity of Christians became remarkable even to a proverb; the Heathens saying with astonishment, "See how these Christians love one another." Even when they were not exactly of the same opinion upon some subjects of religion, they bore with one another, without any violation of that charity which is the great law of Christianity. Thus, in that famous controversy about keeping Easter, between the eastern and western churches, Irenæus, in a letter to Victor, tells him, that "bishops in former times, however they differed about the observation of it, yet always maintained entire concord and fellowship with one another,

Digitized by Google

the churches being careful to maintain a peaceable communion, though differing in some particular rites and ceremonies." Thus, when Polycarp came to Rome, from the churches of the east, to treat with Anicetus about this and other affairs, though they could not satisfy each other to yield the controversy, yet they received the Holy Communion together; and Anicetus (to do the greater honour to Polycarp) gave him leave to celebrate the Eucharist in his church, and at last they parted in great peace and friendship; "it being agreed amongst them, by common consent, (says Sozomen), that in keeping this festival, they should each follow their own custom, but by no means destroy the peace and communion that was between them; for they reckoned it (says he) a very foolish and unreasonable thing, that those should fall out for a few rites and customs, who agreed in the main principles of religion."

These Christians gave solid proofs of their charity by their good works. Justin Martyr, describing their assemblies on the Lord's day, tells us, that "those who were able and willing, contributed what they saw good: and the collection was lodged in the hands of the bishop, and by him distributed for the relief of the widows and orphans, the sick or indigent, the prisoners or strangers, or any that were in need." In the next age they were reduced to monthly offerings, as appears from Tertullian, who says, that "at their religious assemblies, upon a monthly day, every one, according to his ability, laid by somewhat for charitable uses;" (in a kind of poor man's box.) Another instance of their love and

Digitized by Google

charity, was the deliverance of Christians from slavery. Cyprian wrote to the bishops of Numidia about the redemption of those Christians amongst them, who had been taken captive by the barbarians, and sent a large sum of money, which he and his people had contributed.*

## Sect. 7.—*Humanity.*

The primitive Christians did not confine their charity to themselves; they did "good unto all men," as well as "unto them that were of the household of faith." This, Julian the emperor, who was trying to destroy Christianity, plainly confesses; for urging the chief pagan priest of Galatia, to take care of the poor, and to build hospitals in every city for entertaining poor strangers and travellers, both of their own and other religions; he adds, "For it is a shame, that when the Jews suffer none of their people to beg, and the wicked Galileans (Christians) relieve not only their own, but also those of our party, that we only should be wanting in so necessary a duty."

Eusebius, speaking of the dreadful plague and famine that happened in the east, under Maximin, adds, that "the care of the Christians towards all, evidently approved itself to the Gentiles that were about them; they being the only persons that, during this sad state of things, performed the real offices of mercy and humanity; partly in burying the dead, (thousands dying of whom no care was

* The Church of England Missionary Society has, in the present day, a great number of African children under its care, delivered from slavery, and instructed in religion.

Digitized by Google

taken,) partly in gathering together the poor that were ready to starve, and distributing bread to every one of them. And the charity was the more remarkable, since Christians were at this very time under a most heavy persecution." In the plague that, in the time of Gallus and Volusian, raged through the whole Roman empire, (and that more or less for fifteen years,) especially at Carthage, when multitudes were swept away every day, and the streets filled with the dead; people trembling for themselves, and deserting their nearest friends and kindred; Cyprian, the bishop, called the Christians together; instructed them in the duties of mercy and charity; put them in mind that it was no great wonder if their charity extended to their own party; that the way to be perfect was to do something more than Heathens and Publicans, to overcome evil with good, and to love their enemies. Immediately they agreed to assist their enemies, every one lending help according to his rank and station. Those who, by reason of their poverty, could contribute nothing, did what was more, they gave their own labour to assist the sufferers.

But their humanity was not confined to the relief of bodily distress. The soul being of a much nobler nature, and infinitely more precious than the body, they were anxious to save men's souls, and to recover them out of the snare of the devil, by bringing them to the knowledge of the truth. For this they prayed earnestly. "We Christians (says Cyprian) serve the one and true God that made heaven and earth, and pray to him, night and day, not only for ourselves, but for all men."

Digitized by Google

They spared neither pains nor cost, that they might instruct men in the way to heaven. Pamphilus, the martyr, amongst other instances of his charity, used readily to bestow the Holy Scriptures upon those that were willing to read; for which purpose he had always great numbers of those sacred volumes by him, that he might distribute them: thus furnishing persons with those divine treasures, whose purses could not reach to the price of the Scriptures; which were much dearer in those days than they are since the art of printing has been discovered.

## CHAPTER II.

### RELIGIOUS CUSTOMS OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS.

HERE it will be well to add a few particulars respecting the religious customs of the early Christians; as the reader will thereby see the means by which they nourished, in their own souls, the excellent virtues that have been just mentioned.

### SECT. 1.—*Private devotions.*

THE first Christians attended to the duty of secret worship; prayer and reading the word of God. Valens, deacon of the church of Jerusalem, a venerable old man, had so studied the Scriptures, that he could repeat whole pages together. So also could John, an Egyptian, who had his eyes put out, and was condemned to the mines



Digitized by Google

in Palestine. The word of Christ dwelt in him richly. What a consolation must this have been to himself and his fellow-sufferers! Secret worship is, indeed, a most important duty in prosperity as well as in adversity, to the young as well as to the aged. Satan is peculiarly anxious and artful to make Christians neglect, or perform without much earnestness, this duty. Guard, reader, against your enemy. Be instant in prayer. If you neglect the Bible and prayer, you stand defenceless, without your shield, without your helmet, without your breastplate, without your girdle, without your sword. How, then, will you be able to stand in the day of battle, when powerful temptations arise? The neglect of secret worship is the first step of departure from the faith.

## Sect. 2.—*Family worship.*

The first Christians kept up the worship of God in their families. They prayed before and after meals, and took great care in instructing their families in divine things, and often sang psalms even in their usual labours. Clemens praises the Corinthians, because they took care to admonish their young men, and exhorts them to instruct those still younger in the knowledge of the fear of God, and to make their children partakers of the discipline of Christ. Even after the piety of the first Christians had declined, we have the following proofs of their care in teaching the young. Nazianzen commends his mother, because not only she herself was consecrated to

Digitized by Google

God, and brought up under a pious education, but because she conveyed it down as an inheritance to her children. Her daughter Gorgonia was so well seasoned with holy principles, that she walked in the steps of so good a pattern, and not only reclaimed her husband, but educated her children and nephews in the ways of religion. It is also affirmed, that in those early times of Christianity, the most illiterate persons, instead of profane wanton songs which corrupt the mind, used only spiritual and divine hymns, so that in the field you might hear the ploughman at his Hallelujahs, the mower at his hymns, and the vine-dresser singing David's psalms. How much is family worship neglected in the present age! Reader, have you children or servants in your family? Try then, by mild religious advice, and by family worship, to make them "wise unto salvation." If they perish for want of Christian knowledge, will you not be called for this into judgment?

### Sect. 3.—*Public worship.*

With respect to their public worship, many ancient Christian churches used forms of prayer, or liturgies. Sitting in prayer was thought very wrong. The people generally stood when the gospels were read. "Upon the day called Sunday, (says Justin Martyr,) all of us that live either in city or country meet together in one place." During a violent persecution, Pliny tells the emperor that Christians "assembled on a stated day, before daylight, to sing hymns to Christ as to



Digitized by Google

God." Did they, at the risk of life, thus assemble themselves together? and shall we undervalue and neglect the public means of grace?

### Sect. 4.—*The sacraments.*

With respect to the sacraments: Among the primitive Christians, the stated times of baptism were Easter and Whitsuntide, especially Easter Eve. In cases of necessity, they baptized at any other time. Infants, as well as grown persons, were baptized. The sureties, or godfathers and godmothers, undertook that the child should be brought up religiously in Christian principles. Persons immediately after baptism were clothed in white garments. At years of discretion, those baptized in infancy came to the rite of confirmation, before they received the Lord's supper. The Lord's supper was celebrated, at first, every day, then every Sunday, afterwards every month, and, at length, three times in the year, at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide.

### Sect. 5.—*Fasts and festivals.*

In many ancient churches solemn fasts were either weekly or annual; weekly on Wednesdays and Fridays, held till three in the afternoon. The annual fast was that of Lent. The festivals observed by the primitive Christians, were Christmas day, Epiphany, Easter, and Whitsunday: Christmas day to commemorate our Saviour's birth; the feast of Epiphany to commemorate the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles, or appearance of

Digitized by Google

the star to the wise men; Easter, to commemorate our Saviour's resurrection; and Whitsunday, to commemorate the gift of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

They highly respected the martyrs, and their day of suffering was styled their birthday. Solemnities were kept at the tombs of martyrs; and these festivals were observed with great rejoicing, and mutual love and charity. In after ages, this custom was very much abused, for people put their trust in the martyrs, as mediators and intercessors with God, whereas there is but one mediator, but one meritorious advocate, the Lord Jesus Christ. The church of Smyrna, in an account of the martyrdom of Polycarp, their bishop, says, that after he was dead, many of the Christians were desirous to have the remains, to give them decent burial, but were prevented by some Jews, who suggested that the Christians, leaving their crucified master, might henceforth worship Polycarp; "this they did (say they) not considering how impossible it is that ever we should either forsake Christ, who died for the salvation of mankind, or that we should worship any other. We *adore* him as the Son of God; but the martyrs as the disciples and followers of our Lord, we deservedly *love* for their eminent kindness to their prince and master; whose companions and fellow-disciples we also by all means desire to be." This is a valuable proof that they paid only proper respect to martyrs, but did not pray to them for blessings.



Digitized by Google

## Sect. 6.—*Church discipline.*

A few remarks may be added, respecting the discipline of the primitive church. The holy Christians in those times were careful to keep the honour of their religion unspotted, to stifle every sin in its birth, and, by bringing offenders to public punishment, to keep them from spreading a bad example. For this reason they watched over one another, told persons privately when they noticed them in fault, and, when that would not do, brought them before the church. Falling into idolatry was the most common sin that came before them, and which, for some ages, mostly exercised the discipline of the church. Sometimes Christians transgressed by giving up the Scriptures to the rage of their enemies, which was accounted renouncing Christianity. This was especially remarkable under Diocletian's persecution in the African churches. For Diocletian had put forth an edict, that Christians should deliver up their Scriptures, and the writings of the church, to be burnt. Many Christians, to avoid the storm, delivered up their Bibles, and were, at other times, guilty of idolatry, by worshipping idols. The punishment consisted in being deprived of the Christian privilege of receiving the Lord's supper, for two, three, ten, fifteen, twenty, or thirty years, and sometimes for life. Whilst Novatian and his party refused to admit to the communion, those who had denied their Saviour during persecution, other Christians maintained, that brethren who, in that sad ca-

Digitized by Google

lamity, had fallen from their profession, should be restored, after a time, upon repentance.

---

# BOOK V.

## CHRISTIAN RECORDS RESPECTING THE FOURTH, FIFTH, AND SIXTH CENTURIES.

## CHAPTER I.

### PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL.

ARMENIA, which had probably been visited with the light of Christianity before, was more completely illuminated, when Tiridates, the king, became a Christian. This change was chiefly produced by the labours of Gregory, commonly called the Enlightener. In Persia, also, the gospel was more extensively propagated.

It is related that Meropius, a Tyrian philosopher, desirous of travelling in Abyssinia, took with him two boys, related to him, who understood the Greek tongue; and that the natives murdered the whole company, except the boys, who were presented to the king. Their names were Ædesius and Frumentius. On the king's death, the queen-dowager engaged them to govern the affairs of the realm and educate the young prince. Frumentius was prime minister. He inquired of some Roman merchants whether they had met with any Christians in the kingdom, and, having discovered some, he erected a church for their

Digitized by Google

use, and some of the natives, being converted, joined them. On the king's accession to the throne, Frumentius desired leave to return to his own country, and arriving at Alexandria, he saw Athanasius, the bishop, and informed him of the probability of evangelising the country, if Missionaries were sent. Athanasius told him, that none was so fit for the office as himself; he was, therefore, appointed the first bishop of the Abyssinians, and having preached the gospel with much success, he erected many churches.

The Iberians, now called Georgians, near the Black Sea, took prisoner a pious woman, whose sanctity of manners engaged the respect of these barbarians. A sick child of the king's was sent to the women of the country to be cured, but the case baffled their skill, and the child was committed to the Christian captive, who succeeded in healing the infant. The queen herself also was afterwards healed of a distemper. The king sent her presents in token of his gratitude; but she returned them, assuring him that "godliness was her riches, and that she should esteem it as the noblest present if he would worship the God whom she adored." Both the king and queen, it is said, embraced the gospel, and exhorted their subjects to receive it, and an embassy was sent to Constantine, to procure Missionaries to instruct them.

Constantius, the emperor, sent ambassadors to the Sabeans of Arabia Felix, requiring that the Roman inhabitants might build churches. Theophilus, who had long been with Constantine, as hostage, was ordained and sent among them; he

Digitized by Google

erected churches, and spread, at least, the profession of Christianity; but it was an erroneous, namely the Arian, faith.

During the reign of Valens, a large body of the Goths, who had remained attached to their ancient superstitions, notwithstanding the previous conversion of some of their countrymen, were permitted to pass the Danube, and to inhabit Dacia, Mœsia, and Thrace, on condition of living subject to the Roman laws, and embracing Christianity. This condition was accordingly accepted by their king. Ulphilas, bishop of those Goths who dwelt in Mœsia, translated the four gospels into the Gothic language. This was a great benefit; but they were not rightly taught Christian truth, for they were Arians; Moses, an Egyptian monk, preached to the Saracens, and the queen, Maovia, was a Christian. In France, the labours of Martin, bishop of Tours, were successful in the destruction of idolatry.

In the fifth century, the Indians on the coast of Malabar were instructed in Christianity by the Syrian Mar-Thomas, a Nestorian, though the church was, perhaps, founded by St. Thomas the apostle. A number of Jews, in the island of Crete, who had been deceived by the impostor Moses Credentius, became Christians. The northern nations, who had destroyed the western Roman empire, embraced also the religion of Christ.

About the year 430, Germanus, bishop of Auxerre, in France, accompanied by Lupus, bishop of Troyes, visited Great Britain, chiefly to oppose Pelagian error. They preached in the churches, and in the open country, to vast crowds,

Digitized by Google

and, supporting themselves by passages from Scripture, in the hearing of all the people, were allowed to be victorious; and the teachers of Pelagianism were silenced. When Attila, with an army of Huns, was destroying cities in France, the city of Troyes was saved by the courage and piety of Lupus the bishop, who entreated the fierce warrior to spare the flock, and only strike the pastor, Lupus himself. Attila spared both pastor and people.

Christianity was taught in Ireland a very long time before Patrick visited that country; but when he began to preach, his success was so great, that he has ever since been looked upon as the chief teacher of Ireland. He is said to have built a great number of churches, and died about the year 460, in an advanced age.

Palladius was sent about this time, by the bishop of Rome, to the Scots, chiefly for the purpose of opposing Pelagianism. There was a Christian church in Scotland long before. The Scottish king, Donald, embraced the Gospel in the year 203; and, in 277, king Crotalinth expelled the Druids. In the sixth century the labours of Columban, an Irish monk, were very successful in Scotland. He preached in the Western Isles and Highlands, and built a college at Iona, in which numerous missionaries were educated. Gildas, of Dumbarton, was also a great preacher in Scotland, Ireland, and Brittany. He exhorted six princes to repent, when the Saxons were desolating the country.

About the year 496, Clovis, king of the Franks, though a wicked man, became the instrument of

Digitized by Google

Providence to promote the gospel. His wife, Clotilda, was a zealous Christian, and through her influence he was induced to profess Christianity. The king, his sister, and 3000 of his army, were baptized at Rheims. When this queen, (Clotilda,) who so earnestly strove to promote the Gospel, lost her infant son, she said, she "rejoiced that God had thought her worthy to bear a son, who had been called to his kingdom."

In the sixth century, the bishops of Constantinople, under the protection of the Grecian emperors, succeeded in converting some barbarous nations, near the Euxine sea, amongst whom were the Abasgi. The Heruli, who dwelt beyond the Danube, with other uncivilized nations, were converted during the reign of Justinian. Remigius, bishop of Rheims, was remarkably successful in France.

In Britain, by the pious efforts of Bertha, a French princess, wife of Ethelbert, king of Kent, (one of the Saxon monarchs,) the mind of the king became well disposed towards the Christian religion; and in 596, the Roman bishop, Gregory, sent into Britain forty benedictine monks. The chief of them (Austin) succeeded in converting Ethelbert, with the greater part of the inhabitants of Kent, to the profession of Christianity. This mission is said to have proceeded from the following circumstance:—Walking one day in the market-place, Gregory observed several fine youths sold as slaves; he asked whence they came, and was informed, from Britain. He then inquired, "Are the inhabitants of that island Christians or Pagans?" He was told, Pagans. "Alas!" said

Digitized by Google

he, "does the Prince of Darkness possess such countenances? Are forms so fair without divine grace? What is the name of the nation?" It was answered, Angles. "In truth," said he, "they have angelic countenances; it is a pity they should not be joint heirs with angels. What part of Anglia do they come from?" From Deira, (that is, Northumberland, Yorkshire, &c.) "Let them be delivered De ira, that is, from the wrath of God. What is the name of the king?" Ella. "Let us," said he, still playing on the name, "teach them to sing Allelujah." Gregory was then only a presbyter, but he never lost sight of a mission to England; and when he became bishop of Rome, he put it into execution. Austin returned to France, and received ordination as archbishop of Canterbury. Gregory sent more missionaries, and many were converted. This pleasing prospect, however, was soon clouded by the unholy zeal which Austin employed to establish the Roman discipline and customs, in which he was opposed by the bishops and monks of Wales, the successors of the first British Christians.

In Germany, the Bohemians, the Thuringians, and the Boii, are said to have embraced the Christian religion. The Lombards, who conquered Italy, oppressed the Christians at first, but afterwards received the Gospel. It is to be feared, however, that those were mostly Christians in name only, not true converts, who have been mentioned in this chapter. If there was much piety, there was much superstition also.

Digitized by Google

## CHAPTER II.

### PERSECUTIONS OF THE CHURCH.

EVEN in the ages that followed the overthrow of idolatry in the Roman empire, we still find the disciples of Christ often suffering.

### SECT. 1.—*The persecution in Persia.*

THE Gospel having spread into Persia, the Pagan priests, who worshipped the sun, persuaded the emperor Sapor to persecute Christians in all parts of his empire. Many eminent persons in the church and state fell martyrs; even thousands were put to death for not worshipping the sun. Usthazares, tutor to the Persian princes, was a Christian. Sapor sent for him, and asked him, "Why he mourned?" He answered, 'O king, this grieves me, that I am this day alive, who should rather have died long since; and that I see this sun, which, against my heart and mind, for your pleasure, dissemblingly I appeared to worship; but I will never be so mad again, as, instead of the Maker of all things, to worship the creatures which he hath made.' When he was carried away to be beheaded, he desired the king, that for all the faithful services he had done to his father, and to him, he would now cause to be proclaimed openly, that Usthazares was beheaded, not for any treachery or crime committed against the king or realm, but only because he was a Christian, and would not, at the king's pleasure,



Digitized by Google

deny his God. This request was granted, and many were established in Christianity at his death, as many had been staggered by his apostasy.

Constantine the Great, being informed of the persecutions in Persia, wrote a long letter to the Persian monarch in favour of the Christians, in which he mentions the vengeance that had fallen on persecutors, and the great success that had attended those who had not persecuted the Christians. The persecution by this means ended during the life of Sapor, but it was again renewed under Isdigerdes, Varanus, and Cosroes. Under the latter, Anastasius died a martyr. He had been in Cosroes' army, when that king took Jerusalem, and having inquired why Christians honoured the crucified Jesus, he embraced the Gospel. One persecution in Persia was occasioned by the imprudence of Abdas, bishop of Susa, who destroyed a temple of the Magi, or Persian priests. The persecution that followed this indiscreet act, lasted from 419 to 449,—30 years; a warning to those who have more zeal than meekness and knowledge. To convert the souls, not subvert the temples of the Heathen, is the work of the Christian ministry.

### Sect. 2.—*The persecutions by the Arians, and by the emperor Julian.*

Arius, a priest of Alexandria, in 318, began to publish errors, which caused numberless calamities to the Christian world. He denied the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. At the great council of Nice, the Nicene Creed was written to

Digitized by Google

oppose this error. Hosius, bishop of Corduba, in Spain, who drew up this creed, was tortured when above 100 years of age, till he agreed to the Arian errors: but he repented of having done so, and died in peace. After the death of Constantine the Great, the Arians gained the favour of the emperor Constantius, his son and successor in the east; and a persecution was raised against the bishops and clergy. Many bishops and others were banished to desert places, and their sees filled with Arians. In Egypt and Lybia, thirty bishops were martyred by the Arians; and George, the Arian bishop of Alexandria, began a persecution in that city. Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, one of the most eminent Christians of that day, was often banished and forced to flee for his life. Paul, archbishop of Constantinople, after exile and many trials, was strangled in a dungeon. Secundus, a priest, was murdered by Secundus, an Arian bishop; but, like Stephen, prayed to Jesus for the forgiveness of his enemies, and into his hands commended his soul. Potamo, bishop of Heraclea, who had been deprived of one eye in Diocletian's persecution, died of wounds which the Arians inflicted.

The emperor Julian was the nephew of Constantine the Great. Constantius dying, Julian succeeded him, and renounced Christianity. He tried to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem, but fire, bursting out of the ground, prevented the workmen from going on. He deprived all Christians of offices at court, in the magistracy, and in the army. Basil, of Ancyra, in Galatia, notwithstanding promises, threats, and racks, was firm



Digitized by Google

in the faith, and remained in prison to undergo other sufferings. The emperor coming to Ancyra, determined to examine Basil himself, and did every thing in his power to dissuade him from persevering in the faith. Basil continued as firm as ever, and was tortured till he died. Bibiana and Demetria, two sisters, were robbed of their property because Christians, and were martyrs. Their father had before been banished, and their mother beheaded. Donatus, bishop of Arezzo, and Hilarinus, a hermit, suffered: also Gordian, a Roman magistrate. Artemius, commander in chief of the Roman forces in Egypt, being a Christian, was first deprived of his commission, then of his estate, and lastly of his head. Cassian, a schoolmaster of Imola, was put to death by his own scholars. The persecution raged dreadfully about the latter end of 363, in Palestine; many were burnt alive, others were dragged by their feet through the streets, till they expired; some were scalded to death, many stoned, and great numbers had their brains beaten out with clubs. In Alexandria, the martyrs suffered by the sword, burning, crucifixion, and being stoned. In Arethusa, several were ripped open. Marcus, bishop of Arethusa, a venerable old man, after other tortures, was daubed over with honey, and, in a basket fastened to the top of a pole, exposed to the beams of the sun, and to the fury of such little insects as would prey upon him. Julian, the apostate, died of a wound he received in the Persian war, in 363. He was succeeded by Jovian, who restored peace to the church. Jovian was an officer in Julian's army, who, when the

Digitized by Google

emperor sent out his edict, that all the soldiers should either sacrifice or lay down their arms, threw away his belt, rather than obey that impious command. The emperor, at that time, for reasons of state, would not suffer him to depart; and, after the death of Julian, when, by the vote of the whole army, he was chosen emperor, he refused the honour, till the army had renounced idolatry. After the decease of Jovian, Valentinian and Valens succeeded. Valens, who had the command in the east, was an Arian, of a persecuting disposition. Eighty devout men were, by the emperor's command, thrust into a ship, which, being brought into open sea, was set on fire.

The provinces of the Roman empire were, at length, invaded by Northern nations, called Goths, Vandals, &c. &c. Athanaric, king of the east Goths, having been defeated by the Romans, wreaked his vengeance on his Christian subjects, in the year 370. The houses of those who would not worship idols, were burnt, as well as the inhabitants. Eusebius, bishop of Samosata, was one of the most eminent champions of Christ against the Arian errors. Eusebius went in disguise through Syria and Palestine, encouraging those who had lost their ministers; but an Arian woman threw a tile at him from the top of a house, which fractured his scull, so that he died, in 380. The Vandals, who were Arians, passing to Africa in the fifth century, under their leader Genseric, persecuted the faithful Christians wherever they came. Having plundered the city of Carthage, they put the bishop and all the clergy into a leaky ship, and committed it to the mercy of the waves;



Digitized by Google

but, providentially, the vessel arrived safe at Naples. Some Christians were beaten, scourged, and banished to Capsur, where it pleased God to make them the means of converting many of the Moors to Christianity; but this coming to the ears of Genseric, he sent orders that they and their new converts should be tied by the feet to chariots, and dragged about till they were dashed to pieces. Pampinian, the bishop of Mansuetes, was tortured to death with plates of hot iron; the bishop of Urice was burnt; and the bishop of Habensa banished for refusing to deliver up the sacred books. Julia, a lady of Carthage, taken by the Vandals, was sold as a slave to a Pagan, Eusebius, of Syria, who could not but admire her patience and diligence as a servant. At Corsica, she refused to join in an idolatrous festival; and when the governor Felix offered to procure her liberty, if she would sacrifice to idols, she replied, that "whilst permitted to enjoy her religion, she was as free as she wished to be." The governor (to the great grief even of her Heathen master) condemned her to be hanged. Genseric, having plundered Rome, returned to Africa, when the Arians persuaded him to persecute the Christians, as they assured him they were friends to the people of Rome. Huneric, his successor, banished 5000 Christians to the deserts; obliged some noblemen to reap corn; and of 348 bishops who were banished, some were murdered. Dionysia, a pious lady, was scourged; but looking at her son, who was tortured, said, "Remember, son, that we have been baptized in the name of the Trinity; let us not lose the garment of salva-

Digitized by Google

tion, lest the Master should say, Cast them into outer darkness." Her son suffered with constancy. Victorian, governor of Carthage, the richest man in Africa, was desired by Huneric to renounce his belief in the Trinity. "Tell the king," said he, "I would not for a little temporal honour be ungrateful to my God, who has given me grace to believe in him." He was tormented, and then slept in Jesus. Dagila, wife to the king's cup-bearer, left her husband and children, being scourged, and banished to a desert, rather than forsake the doctrine of the Trinity. Twelve children (singers of the church of Carthage) refused to depart from the truth, though flattered and beaten by the Arian party.

Hermenigild was the eldest son of Leovigild, king of the Goths, in Spain. This prince, who was an Arian, became a convert to the true faith, by means of his wife Ingonda, a French princess. When the king heard that his son had changed his religious sentiments, he stripped him of the command at Seville, where he was governor, and threatened to put him to death, unless he renounced the faith. The prince put himself in a posture of defence, and many in Spain declared for him. The king, upon this act of rebellion, began to punish all orthodox Christians who could be seized by his troops, and thus a very severe persecution commenced; he likewise marched against his son with a powerful army. The prince was at length taken; loaded with chains, he was sent to Seville, and at Easter, refusing to receive the Lord's supper from an Arian bishop, the enraged king ordered his guards to cut the prince

Digitized by Google

to pieces, A. D. 586. How dreadful a picture do we here see! What a display of corrupt passions! A son in rebellion against his king, his father! A father the murderer of his son! Not religion, but the want of true Christian knowledge, caused all this sin and misery. Ingonda died in her flight to Greece. Afterwards, it is said, the king repented of his crimes, and his other son, Recared, became a just and pious prince, and abolished the Arian errors in Spain. The Arians were themselves unjustly persecuted in Arabia Felix, by a Jewish prince, named Damien; but, in 521, Eleesban, an Abyssinian king, conquered Damien. After Eleesban's death, the Jews in Arabia chose Dunaan as their king, and 280 Arian ministers were murdered.

After the preceding observations on the persecutions endured by those who maintained the holy and scriptural doctrine of the Trinity, it may be well just to add,—that it is not enough to confess this glorious truth with our lips; we must also "believe with the heart unto righteousness." Is it not to be feared, that numbers who maintained that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost are worthy of all praise and honour, are now even "in torments," cursing the holy triune God? We should examine ourselves, since even in churches which maintain the truths of God's holy word, there are tares among the wheat. Not only must our creed be scriptural, but we must also "walk humbly with our God." True faith will produce true holiness and virtue. Unless sanctified by God the Holy Spirit, we cannot enjoy the blessing of redemption through

Digitized by Google

God the Son; and without the benefit of this redemption, we shall not be able in sincerity to call God the Father, *our* Father; and to those who are not his "children by adoption and grace," even God, who is "love," will be "a consuming fire."

## Sect. 3.—*The persecution in Great Britain by the Saxons.*

A Briton, named Pelagius, (or Morgan,) introduced very dangerous errors into the church of Christ. He especially denied the need of the grace and help of God's Holy Spirit. When Lupus and Germanus, two French bishops, were in Britain to oppose this false doctrine, the Saxons, who had invaded the country, (and who compelled the Britons to retire to Wales,) engaged in battle with the Britons, in a place called Germain's meadow, near Mould, in Flintshire. The victory gained by the Britons was called "the Alleluia victory," for they shouted the word Alleluia as they began the dreadful fight. In 446, many of the Britons, being driven by the Anglo-Saxons out of the country, went to Brittany, in France. There were several pious bishops among them, so that the Gospel flourished there. The Christians, in Britain, often suffered from those who remained Heathens in Scotland, who, like the Saxons, pierced the ministers with their instruments of war, and burnt the churches. In 586, the British monks of Bangor (who were not an idle, but *industrious* race of *poor* Christians) were put to death by Ethelfrid, the Saxon king of

Digitized by Google

Northumberland. These monks were, probably, about 200 in number. In the south of Scotland, the Saxons also put many persons to death. Through God's mercy, the inhabitants of Great Britain have now, for many hundred years, lived happily together; they have the blessing of living under one king, whilst their forefathers, under many princes, waged bloody wars against each other. Loyalty prevails amongst the people: may it always prevail; and may they only "strive together for the faith of the Gospel," and who shall be the most holy,—who shall be the most peaceable and humble Christians!

## CHAPTER III.

### BRIEF ACCOUNT OF PERSONS OF EMINENT PIETY.

During the three centuries that followed the time of Constantine, multitudes in every rank and station adorned the doctrine of God their Saviour in their lives, and, dying in the faith, rejoiced in hope of being "numbered with the saints, in glory everlasting." Some few shall be now mentioned.

Ephrem Syrus, a learned and pious writer, during a famine at Edessa, relieved the distressed, and provided 300 beds for them. He used to say, concerning perseverance, "The resolute traveller knows that his journey is long, and the way dirty, yet goes on in hopes to come to his house; so let a Christian (though the way to heaven be narrow, though it be set with troubles and persecutions) go on, till he has finished his

Digitized by Google

course with joy; for heaven is his home." Concerning the soul, he used to say, "He that feasts his body and starves his soul, is like him who feasts his slave and starves his wife." He died in 404.

BASIL, bishop of Cæsarea, an elegant and pious author, was distinguished for his zeal. When the emperor Valens persuaded him to embrace the Arian doctrine, promising to promote him to great dignity, he undauntedly told him, that "such fair promises were fit only to entice children, but that he was taught and nourished by the holy Scripture, and was ready rather to suffer death, than to suffer one syllable of the Scriptures to be altered." He used to say of self-knowledge, "To know thyself is very difficult: for as the eye can see all things but itself, so some can discern all faults but their own." Of the Scripture he said, "It is a physician's shop of preservatives against heresies; a pattern of profitable laws against rebellious spirits; a treasury of most costly jewels in lieu of beggarly elements; and a fountain of pure water, springing up to eternal life." HILARY, bishop of Poictiers, in France, also contended "earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," against those who denied the divinity of the Lord Jesus. So did GREGORY NAZIANZEN, (afterwards bishop of Constantinople,) who, when sailing to Athens for education, was awakened to a sense of the importance of religion, during a violent storm. His eloquence was astonishing, and his piety sincere.

JEROM, a learned monk, retired to Bethlehem, and spent his time in promoting the kingdom of

Digitized by Google

Christ. He was the translator of the Latin Bible called the Vulgate, and the author of many commentaries. His usual prayer was, "Lord, let me know myself, that I may the better know thee, the Saviour of the world." He often thought of these words, "Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment." Jerom mentions Nepotian and Blesilla as persons of eminent piety. "Nepotian," he says, "by daily reading and meditation, had made his soul a library of Christ;" and he tells us of Blesilla, a devout widow, that "though she was so far overpowered with weakness and sickness, that her foot would scarce bear her body, yet she was seldom found without a Bible in her hand." He also speaks of Fabiola, a Roman lady, who sold her estate, and gave the money to the poor; *she built an hospital*, it is said, and was the first that did so. Jerom was also intimate with other devout persons. Happy are those believers, in every age of the church, who have friends to whom they are united in the bonds of Christian fellowship; friends with whom they can "take sweet counsel;" from whom they may receive wise instructions in "running the race that is set before them," and of whose sympathy and prayers they may be certain, amidst the temptations and afflictions of this mortal life.

Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea, in Palestine, wrote a most valuable history of the Christian church; he is indeed the father of church-history. Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem, wrote a commentary on the ancient liturgy of the church of Jerusalem, usually called the liturgy of St. James. Macarius, an Egyptian monk, was an able practical

Digitized by Google

writer. Comparing the soul of a believer to a bride prepared for her husband, Macarius says, "She receiveth, indeed, the earnest of the Spirit in the divine gifts; let it be either the gift of healing, or of knowledge, or of illumination; [the extraordinary gifts of the primitive ages;] yet doth she never rest in all this, but goes on till she attain at last to the enjoyment of a perfect communion with God himself: that is, to such a love as is unchangeable and never-failing, and, consequently, frees those from anxiety and trouble that obtain it."

Chrysostom, born at Antioch, was afterwards chosen bishop of Constantinople. His boldness in reproving sin made many his enemies, at the head of whom was the empress Eudoxia. The empress causing her picture of silver to be set up upon a pillar near the church, he sharply inveighed against it, as having a tendency to introduce images into the Christian churches; which so offended her that she caused a council to be summoned, who deposed him. The empress having once sent him a threatening message, he gave this answer, "Go, tell her I fear nothing but sin." He was carried to Caucasus, in Armenia, where he was followed by such a number of people, who came to hear him preach, that his enemies, envying his fame, procured a second edict to remove him; but upon the way, by reason of the extreme heat, he fainted away, and, falling into fervent prayer, he resigned his spirit into the hands of his Creator. From a principle of Christian zeal, he maintained many presbyters and monks in Phœnicia, partly at his own charge, and partly by the assistance



Digitized by Google

of pious and well-disposed persons, whose only work was to catechise and instruct the Heathen in the principles of the Christian faith. His usual saying was, "Thou shalt neither hate the man for his vice, nor love the vice for the man's sake." Of the soul he remarked, "As the soul is the life of the body, so the life of the soul is God: when the soul departs the body dies, and when God departs the soul dies."

Ambrose, governor of Milan, who had been instructed in religion by his sister Marcellina, was chosen bishop of the same city, though very unwilling himself to undertake so weighty an office. He taught the emperor Gratian (who died at the age of twenty-four) the principles of the Gospel, and the emperor appears to have given proofs of piety. Ambrose sold the church plate at one time, to redeem persons taken into captivity by the Goths. To convince men of the folly of irreligion, he used to say, "When gold is offered, you do not say, I will come again to-morrow and take it, but are glad of present possession: but salvation being proffered to our souls, few men hasten to embrace it." When the emperor Theodosius, in a fit of anger, caused a massacre in Thessalonica, on account of the rebellious conduct of some of the inhabitants, Ambrose forbad the emperor to enter a Christian church for eight months. Another Theodosius, the younger, was a feeble prince. His sister Pulcheria, a wise and devout princess, chiefly governed. This emperor used to rise at an early hour and sing hymns in company with his sisters. He was well acquainted with the Scriptures, and meek and forgiving in his

Digitized by Google

temper. His empress, Placilla, humanely visited the hospitals, and relieved the sick.

Augustine was another distinguished Christian. Monica, the mother of Augustine, also an eminent Christian, took great pains about the conversion of her husband Patricius, and sought to endear herself to him by prudent conduct, and complied with his humours, till at last she won him to the faith. Nor was her anxiety less for her son Augustine, who was tutor to the emperor Valentinian; not being able to gain any quiet to her mind, till Ambrose, bishop of Milan, assured her that he did not think it possible that the child of so many tears should perish. No sooner was his conversion wrought, but her mind was at ease. Augustine discoursing with her alone some few days before her death, concerning the state of the blessed and the joys of heaven, she at last broke off with this farewell: "For my part, my son, I have now no further hopes or pleasures in this world; there was but one thing for which I desired to live, namely, that I might see you a true Christian before I died; this my God has abundantly blessed me with; having let me see you despise the pleasures of this life, and enter into his family and service; so that what do I any longer here?" To Christian parents who read this account, it must surely give the greatest encouragement to "pray without ceasing" for the sanctification and salvation of their children. If parents neglect this duty, and their children perish in their sins, will they not stand speechless in the presence of "God the Judge of all?" Prayer, however, should be attended with wise and affec-



Digitized by Google

tionate instruction and persuasion; and then a divine blessing may be expected. One thing which Augustine particularly notices, is the providence of God, in leading him from place to place, and bringing him under the means of conversion, when nothing was further from his thoughts. He had often prayed for holiness, but feared to lose his beloved sins, till at length the Holy Spirit, by his grace, enabled him to break those bonds asunder. He was baptized by Ambrose, bishop of Milan, who, it is said, composed the sublime and devout hymn called the "Te Deum," upon the occasion of Augustine's baptism. He was afterwards made bishop of Hippo, in Africa, and became an extraordinary light in the church of Christ. He defended scriptural truth in opposition to the errors of the Pelagians, who denied both the corruption of human nature and the necessity of divine grace. He recovered also, by his wisdom and piety, many Donatists who had left the ancient church. He lived in the time when the Vandals broke in upon the Roman empire, destroying all before them, like an overflowing deluge. The churches were burnt, the bishops murdered, and the people slain on heaps. After they had ravaged Italy, they attacked Africa, but Augustine persuaded the people to continue firm in their faith, and resolved rather to suffer death than leave his fold. Hippo endured fourteen months' siege. Augustine was "instant in prayer" till God delivered him from the misery that happened to others, by taking him to a better life at the end of three months' siege. He used to say of prayer, "Prayer that is pure and holy pierceth

Digitized by Google

heaven, and returns not empty: it is a shelter to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge to the devil." His frequent prayer was, "Lord, give first what thou requirest, and then require of me what thou wilt."

PAULINUS, bishop of Nola, was a man of great benevolence, and a native of Bordeaux. Under the Vandalic persecution many Christians were carried slaves out of Italy into Africa, for whose redemption Paulinus expended his whole estate. At last a widow came to him, and entreated him to give her as much as would ransom her son: he told her he had not one penny left, nothing but his own person, which he would freely give to procure her son's ransom.* This the woman looked upon as deriding her calamity, and not pitying her case: but he assured her he was in earnest; and both took shipping for Africa. On their arrival Paulinus addressed himself to the prince, begged the release of the widow's son, and offered himself in his room. Paulinus, it is said, then became the prince's slave, who employed him in keeping his garden. His master, having discovered who he was, set him at liberty, and gave him leave to ask what he would. He begged the release of all his countrymen then in bondage; which was granted, and all were joyfully sent home. When his friend, Sulpicius Severus, asked for his picture, he sent him a picture of his heart.

THEODORET was born at Antioch, of noble and religious parents. His mother being without hopes of any issue, she, with her husband, resolved

* Greg. Mag. dial. b. iii. c. 1.



Digitized by Google

to bequeath what they had to maintain poor Christians: yet at length God gave her a son. He increased in learning and piety, and was made bishop of Cyrus, in Syria. He wrote a Christian history, and diligently watched over the flock of Christ. PETER CHRYSOLOGUE was born in France, and was archbishop of Ravenna. He was eloquent in preaching and holy in conversation. Always before he penned any thing, he would beg God, by prayer, to direct him. Concerning mercy he used to say, "God had rather men should love him than fear him: and to be called father than master: he wins by mercy, that he may not punish by justice: if thou wilt be like thy Father, do likewise." Concerning gluttony and drunkenness he remarked, "As the clouds darken heaven, so intemperance does the mind: as the violence of winds and waves sink a ship, so gluttony and drunkenness sink our souls and bodies into the depth of hell."

BOETHIUS, descended from one of the noblest families in Rome, was deemed one of the first scholars of the age, and was advanced to be sole consul. Under the tyrant Theodoric, he died by the hands of the executioner in the prison at Pavia, whither he had long been banished for his virtues. During his exile he composed his work, "Of the Consolation of Philosophy," which contains the complaints of Boethius, whom Christian philosophy teaches that true happiness consists, not in those temporal benefits which he had lost, but "in the enjoyment of God alone."

COLUMBA, a native of Ireland and of high rank, became so zealous a Christian missionary in

Digitized by Google

Scotland as to be called the apostle of the Highlands. He built the once celebrated monastery in the Island of Iona, in which many bishops and missionaries received their education.

FULGENTIUS was born at Carthage. He gave all his goods to his mother and younger brother, resolving to enter a monastery. Being persecuted, with others, by the Arians, he departed into the wilds of Africa, where he preached and instructed the people, bringing many souls to the knowledge of Christ. To avoid the persecution, Fulgentius intended to sail into Egypt, but by contrary winds was driven to Sicily. The next spring he travelled to Rome, and beholding the splendour of that great city, he said, "How beautiful must the heavenly Jerusalem be, since Rome is so gorgeous? If such honours be given to lovers of vanity, what glory shall be imparted to the saints, who are lovers and followers of truth?" He was chosen bishop of Ruspa, and was worthy to be a bishop.

---

# BOOK VI.

## CHRISTIAN RECORDS RESPECTING THE SEVENTH, EIGHTH, NINTH, TENTH, ELEVENTH, TWELFTH, THIRTEENTH, FOURTEENTH, AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL.

So thick a cloud of superstition overshadowed the Christian church, during the centuries above

Digitized by Google

mentioned, that they may be too justly called the dark ages. Yet even these afford some records of interest, although the painful conviction is continually forced upon the reader's mind, that "the glory was (for a time) departed" from that temple which was at first "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone."

### Sect. 1.—*Progress of the Gospel in the seventh century.*

In the seventh century, Christianity was preached, with much zeal and success, by the Nestorians, (the followers of Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople,) who dwelt in Syria, Persia, and India, among the barbarous nations who lived in the deserts of Asia. By their labours, the knowledge of the gospel was, about the year 637, extended to China, the northern parts of which are said to have abounded with Christians before.

In Britain, Austin laboured to enlarge the boundaries of the church; and by his efforts, and those of his brethren, especially Theodorus, the six Anglo-Saxon kings, who had hitherto remained Pagans, were converted, and Christianity was at length universally embraced throughout Britain. Aidan, a monk of Ireland, was a very zealous missionary. Oswald, a British prince, who had been baptized and educated in Ireland, sent for him. Oswald acted as his interpreter, (for Aidan understood English but imperfectly,) such was the zeal of this monarch to promote religion in

Digitized by Google

the north of England! Thus encouraged, more Irish ministers came over, and many churches were erected. Many of the British, Scotch, and Irish ministers travelled among the Batavian, Belgic, and German nations, and preached Christianity to them. Columban, an Irish monk, evangelized the Suevi, the Boii, the Franks, and other German nations; Gal preached to the Swiss; Kilian, a martyr, to the Franks near Wurtzburg; and Willebrod, an Anglo-Saxon, to the Frieslanders; and his fellow missionaries to the Westphalians. Bavaria received the gospel by the ministry of Robert, bishop of Worms. Emmeram, a Frenchman, leaving his large possessions, travelled to Ratisbon, to spread the Gospel. He refused a large revenue, declaring that he only wished to preach Christ crucified. He was murdered. It must be remembered, however, that the people converted in Europe fell under the dominion of the corrupt church of Rome.

The progress of the Gospel was much retarded in this century by the Saracens. An Arabian false prophet, (Mohammed,) about the year 606, formed the bold design of overthrowing the Christian religion, and within twenty years succeeded, by the force of arms, in imposing his false doctrine on multitudes in Arabia and other countries. After his death, his followers, called Saracens, animated by a spirit of fanatical zeal and fury, and assisted by the Nestorian Christians, extended their conquests to Persia, Mesopotamia, Chaldea, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and the whole northern coast of Africa, as far as the Atlantic ocean. In the year 714, the Saracens defeated the Spaniards,

Digitized by Google

and took possession of the sea-coasts of France, from the Pyrenees to the Rhone. At length the French gained a signal victory over them near Tours, in the year 732. During these invasions of the Saracens, Christianity, in some places, was altogether destroyed. This was not the only scourge which the church suffered; for, in the eighth century, the Turks rushed from Mount Caucasus, overran Colchis, Iberia, Albania, and Armenia, and after having subdued the Saracens, turned their arms against the Greeks. Asia Minor, which had been the scene of the first Christian triumphs, was ravaged by these new followers of Mohammed, and the inhabitants oppressed in the most barbarous manner. It is thought that Revelation ix. 1—11. relates to the Saracens. Whilst numbers of Christians, in order to save their lives, became followers of Mohammed and denied Christ, the Nestorians of Chaldea carried the Gospel, such as they professed, to the Tartars of Imaus; and the Nestorians in India, Chaldea, and the east, enjoyed even privileges under Mohammedan princes.

### Sect. 2.—*Progress of the Gospel in the eighth century.*

In the eighth century, the Germans were converted to the faith of Christ, by Winfrid, an English monk, known by the name of Boniface. By this missionary, the Christian religion was propagated throughout Friesland, Hesse, Thuringia, and other parts of Germany. The Pagans put him to death. During the same period,

Digitized by Google

Corbinian, a French monk, laboured among the Bavarians. Rumold, a native of England or Ireland, travelled into Lower Germany and Brabant, and diffused the truths of Christianity near Mechlin, but was murdered. Firmin, a Frenchman, preached in Alsace, Bavaria, and Switzerland. Liefuvyn, a Briton, laboured with ardent zeal, though with little success, to convert the Belgæ and other neighbouring nations. Winebald, an Anglo-Saxon of royal birth, preached in Germany. The Saxons, who inhabited part of Germany, and the Huns in Pannonia, were forced by Charlemagne to become Christians; but the violent methods used by this prince were not suitable to the spirit of the Gospel. Villehod, an Englishman, was bishop of Bremen, and laboured with patience and success among the Saxons.

### Sect. 3.—*Progress of the Gospel in the ninth century.*

In the ninth century, Cyril and Methodius, two Greek monks, were the instruments of converting the Mœsians, Bulgarians, and Chazari. A Bulgarian princess taken captive, having become a Christian at Constantinople, felt compassion for the king her brother and his people, and urged sending for missionaries:—a pleasing proof that the Almighty often makes even calamities productive of good. Their labours were afterwards extended to the Bohemians and Moravians, at the request of the princes of those nations. Methodius was first bishop of Moravia. He had divine service in the Sclavonian tongue,

Digitized by Google

whilst Cyril translated the Scriptures into the same language.

The Sclavonians, Arentani, and others, inhabitants of Dalmatia, sent to Constantinople, declaring their resolution of submitting to the Grecian empire, and of embracing the Christian religion; and requesting to be supplied with suitable teachers. Their request was granted. The observations, however, made respecting the nature of such conversions as have been just related, must constantly be remembered. The profession of Christianity was, no doubt with many, sincere; but as to the great body of the people, it was, we fear, merely formal.

In this century, Christianity began to be preached in Sweden, Denmark, and Norway. Harold, king of Jutland, being expelled from his dominions, implored the protection of the emperor Lewis, the son of Charlemagne. That prince promised him his assistance, if he would embrace Christianity and permit ministers to preach in his dominions. The Danish prince consented. He was baptized, and returned to his own country, attended by two pious monks, Auscarius and Aubert, who laboured with remarkable success in converting the inhabitants of Cimbria and Jutland. On the death of his companion, Auscarius went into Sweden, where his exertions were also crowned with success. After having been raised to the archbishopric of Hamburgh, he spent the remainder of his life in travelling amongst the Danes, Cimbrians, and Swedes, to form new churches. Rembert, his successor in the church of Bremen, preached to the inhabitants of Bran-

Digitized by Google

denburg. Jeron, an Englishman, went to Holland, and preached the Gospel, as far as appears, with faithfulness. He was crowned with martyrdom. Patto, a Scotchman (bishop of Verden) preached with success amongst Pagans; he faithfully rebuked those professors who disgraced their faith by their vices, and as a reward of his honest zeal was murdered.

The conversion of the natives of Denmark was a happy event for others as well as for themselves; for they had invaded Germany, Britain, Friesland, France, Spain, and Italy, and forcibly seated themselves in various provinces of those kingdoms. When the Danes invaded England and Ireland, they destroyed abbeys and churches, and murdered the clergy. Edmund, king of the East Angles, was scourged and shot to death with arrows, for not forsaking his religion. In Scotland they murdered about 200 monks, called Culdees, who were plain preachers in the villages, &c. and who differed from the Roman church.

## Sect. 4.—*Progress of the Gospel in the tenth century.*

In the tenth century, the Nestorians of Chaldea extended the knowledge of Christianity in Tartary, and afterwards amongst the Tartars called Karit, on the north of China. The Hungarians and Avari fell back into idolatry. A Turkish chief (Gylas) who lived near the Danube was baptized, and received instruction from Hierotheus, a bishop who accompanied him from



Digitized by Google

Constantinople, and encouraged the labours of that bishop amongst his subjects. Sarolta, the daughter of Gylas, was afterwards married to Geysa, chief of the Hungarians, whom she persuaded to embrace Christianity. Geysa, however, was still too much attached to his ancient superstitions, and was only prevented from apostatizing by the zeal of Adalbert, archbishop of Prague. But however imperfect the conversion of the king, humanity and peace began to flourish amongst his barbarous people; and under Stephen, the son of Geysa, Christianity was established in Hungary. He often accompanied the preachers of the gospel, and pathetically exhorted his subjects. He restrained vice, and formed excellent laws. Having subdued the prince of Transylvania, who had invaded his dominions, he restored him to liberty on condition of his permitting the gospel to be freely preached to his people. Some Poles, travelling into Bohemia and Moravia, were struck with the preaching of the gospel, and, on their return, earnestly recommended it to their countrymen. The report reaching the ears of Micislaus, the duke of Poland, he divorced his seven wives, and married Dambrouca, the daughter of Boleslaus, the duke of Bohemia. He was baptized in the year 965, and, by the efforts of the duke and duchess, their subjects were either persuaded or obliged to abandon their idolatry.

The Russian prince, Wolodomir, having married Anne, sister of the Greek emperor, received the Christian faith and was baptized. The Russians followed the example of their prince; and from

Digitized by Google

that time Russia considered herself a daughter of the Greek church.

In Denmark, Gormo the Third afterwards laboured to destroy Christianity, but was compelled by the German emperor, Henry the First, to permit the profession of Christianity in his dominions. Tyra, the queen of Gormo, was a Christian. Unni, archbishop of Hamburgh, with others, came into Denmark, and formed many Christian churches. On the death of Gormo, his successor Harold, being defeated by Otho the Great, embraced the gospel, and zealously supported it amongst his subjects. Suen-Otho, his son, entirely renounced the Christian name, and persecuted his Christian subjects. At length, being driven from his throne, and forced into banishment, amongst the Scots, he was led to reflect on his Christian education, and to repent of his apostasy; and, being restored to his kingdom, spent the remainder of his life in earnest endeavours to promote Christianity. The effect of the word of God in Denmark was such as to prove its excellence. Adam of Bremen, an historian, thus expresses it:—"Look at that very ferocious nation of the Danes; for a long time they have been accustomed, in the praises of God, to resound Alleluia! Look at that piratical people; they are now content with the fruits of their own country." In Sweden, the light of the gospel was almost extinguished. Unni, animated by his success in Denmark, determined to attempt a revival. His pious exertions were prosperous, and he had the happiness of confirming the gospel in Sweden.



Digitized by Google

Haco, king of Norway, who had been driven from his throne, was restored by Harold, king of Denmark; and having become a Christian during his exile, recommended Christianity to his subjects, but they were not persuaded to become Christians till the reign of his successor Olaus. At length Swein, king of Denmark, having conquered Norway, obliged his subjects to renounce idolatry. Amongst the missionaries, Guthebald, an English priest, was the most eminent. From Norway Christianity spread into the Orkney Islands, then subject to that country, and even into Iceland and Greenland. Bernard, Sigefrid, Gunichild, and Rudolf, appear to have been sent by Ethelred, king of England, at the request of Olaus, king of Sweden. Some of these worthy missionaries were murdered by the Pagan nobility. Such was the zeal of king Olaus to promote religion, that he used to travel with the preachers. At length the Pagans, aided by Canute, king of England, defeated and slew him in 1030.

The Emperor Otho, a great and amiable prince, who had the progress of Christianity much at heart, at the earnest request of the Rugi, a barbarous people who inhabited Pomerania and the isle of Rugen, sent Adalbert to revive the knowledge of Christianity. The mission was unsuccessful. But Adalbert, being appointed archbishop of Magdeburgh, was successful in converting great numbers of the Sclavonians.

Since the Saracens in Asia and Africa were active in promoting the false religion of Mohammed, we cannot suppose the gospel made much progress. Indeed many Christians forsook it,

Digitized by Google

Robert, a Norman, who had conquered the dukedom of Apulia, having received baptism, the pope promised to make him king of Sicily, if he would recover that island to Christianity. This he did, and Christianity, which had become nearly extinct, was revived. Many difficulties occurred to prevent the free course of the gospel in Sarmatia, Sclavonia, Bohemia, &c.

SECT. 5.—*Progress of the Gospel in the eleventh century.*

THE Nestorian Christians, in the eleventh century, converted great numbers to the profession of Christianity. In the provinces of Casgar, Nuacheta, Turkistan, Genda and Tangut, metropolitan prelates, with many inferior bishops, were established; from which it appears, that Christianity must have flourished in those countries which are now the seat of Mohammedism and idolatry. Boleslaus, king of Poland, attempted to force his subjects into Christianity, whilst some of his attendants used the more evangelical method of instruction. In an undertaking of this kind, Boniface and eighteen others were massacred. In Asia, many Christians, instead of promoting the gospel, forsook it, and sometimes through fear, sometimes on account of flattering promises, joined themselves to the Saracens and Turks, and became Mohammedans. An Englishman, (Ulfrid,) when in Sweden, preaching against the idol Thor, was slain. Eschil, an English missionary, was also murdered by some of the savage tribes in Sweden. At the close of this



Digitized by Google

century the first Crusades were begun. The princes of Europe sent armies to recover the land of Judea from the Mohammedans, but this did not contribute to the support of true Christianity. The crusades were productive of misery and bloodshed, whilst missionary efforts were productive of happiness.

## Sect. 6.—*Progress of the Gospel in the twelfth century.*

In the twelfth century, Boleslaus, duke of Poland, having taken Stetin, the capital of Pomerania, compelled the inhabitants, as a condition of peace, to receive Christianity. The conqueror sent Otho, bishop of Bamberg, to instruct his new subjects in the gospel. Many of them, among whom were the duke and duchess and their attendants, became Christians. Waldemar, king of Denmark, having subdued the island of Rugen, obliged its inhabitants to listen to the instructions of missionaries. Among these, Absalom, archbishop of Lunden, was eminent, and by his exertions Christianity was firmly seated in this island. The Finlanders also received the gospel. Eric, king of Sweden, having defeated these barbarians, sent Henry, archbishop of Upsal, to evangelize them. He is called "the Apostle of the Finlanders;" yet he was at length assassinated. In Livonia, Mainard, the first missionary, and his successors, Berthold and Albert, at the head of troops raised in Saxony, compelled the wretched inhabitants to receive Christian baptism. How unchristian a method (yet approved

Digitized by Google

by pope Urban) of imparting the gospel of peace! Vicelinus, a man of learning and piety, appointed bishop of Oldenburgh, spent thirty years in the instruction of the Sclavonians, amidst great difficulties and dangers, yet with success.

The revolution which took place in Asiatic Tartary, on the borders of Cathay, near China, by the successful enterprise of the celebrated Nestorian, Prester John, proved for many years highly beneficial to the Christian cause. Towards the close of it, however, Zenghis Khan, a Tartar prince, overturned the kingdom which he had established, and Christianity continued gradually to decline, until at length it sunk entirely; and was succeeded by Mohammedism and Paganism. In Syria and Palestine, the Christians were engaged in wars with the Mohammedans, and therefore we cannot well expect to read of the peaceful triumphs of pure Christianity.

## Sect. 7.—*Progress of the Gospel in the thirteenth century.*

Notwithstanding the victories of the successors of Zenghis Khan, who subdued great part of Asia, and brought great calamities on the Christian inhabitants of China, India, and Persia, it appears that, both in China and in the north of Asia, the Nestorians continued to have a flourishing church in the thirteenth century; but at last the ensnaring influence of the religion of Mohammed left scarcely any thing of Christianity amongst them. The pope used means to convert many of the Tartars to the Christian faith. He

Digitized by Google

sent John de Corvin and other missionaries to erect churches, and promote the interests of the Roman church in China and Tartary. John de Corvin translated the New Testament and Psalms into the Tartar language.

Conrad, duke of Massovia, applied to the Teutonic Knights to undertake the conquest and conversion of the Prussians. After an obstinate contest of fifty years, they established their own dominion and the profession of Christianity amongst them. The Knights pursued the same unchristian methods in the neighbouring countries, particularly in Lithuania.

In Spain, Christianity gained ground. The kings of Castile, Leon, Navarre, and Arragon, waged war with the Saracen princes, who still retained the kingdoms of Valentia, Granada, and Mercia, with the province of Andalusia. The Saracen dominion declined daily. James of Arragon was distinguished by his zealous efforts for the conversion of his Saracen subjects after his recovery of Valentia.

## Sect. 8.—*Progress of the Gospel in the fourteenth century.*

In the fourteenth century, Christianity declined in the East. In Asia, the Turks and Tartars destroyed, wherever they went, the fruits of the labours of the Christian missionaries. In China, Christianity was almost totally extinguished, while Tamerlane, after having subdued the greatest part of Asia, persecuted all who bore the Christian name with the most barbarous severity,

Digitized by Google

and compelled multitudes, by his cruelties, to apostatize from the faith. Hence the progress of the gospel was hindered, instead of being advanced.

In Europe, Jagello, duke of Lithuania, was almost the only prince who retained the Pagan worship of his ancestors. At length, having become a competitor for the crown of Poland, he embraced the Christian faith, and persuaded his subjects to follow his example.

## Sect. 9.—*Progress of the Gospel in the fifteenth century.*

The discovery of America, by Columbus, in the fifteenth century, opened a new and extensive field for missionary efforts. The Africans of the kingdom of Congo, with their king, were also converted to the Romish faith. A great number of Franciscans and Dominicans were sent out to America, who, with the assistance of the cruel invaders of those countries, converted numbers of the wretched natives to the nominal profession of a corrupt form of Christianity. The cruelties of the Spaniards were unspeakably great: but the name of de las Casas, bishop of Chiapa, in Mexico, should be remembered with honour. He was a compassionate man, and longed for the temporal and eternal happiness of the idolatrous Americans. He protested against the cruelty of his countrymen even in the presence of his king. Asiatic Tartary, Mogul, and Tangut, formerly the seats of Christianity, were now become the seats of superstition. Except in China, where the

Digitized by Google

Nestorians preserved some faint remains, scarcely any traces of Christianity existed in those parts of the world.

A new source of calamity to the Christian world, both in Europe and Asia, was the destruction of the Grecian empire, and the capture of Constantinople, by the Turks, in 1453. Since that time the sufferings of those who professed Christianity have been severe, almost beyond example, wherever the Turks have gained power. In Constantinople, in Thessalonica, Philippi, and Corinth, where Christianity had once so eminently flourished, churches were converted into mosques, and the Christians were obliged to attend to their religion in secret and in silence. An awful judgment of God! the consequence of the corrupt state of the Grecian Church! There are still, however, considerable remains of Christianity in the Turkish dominions, both in Europe and Asia. In Constantinople there are above twenty Christian Churches, and above thirty in Thessalonica. The seven churches of the Apocalypse have, for the most part, lost the light of the gospel! Smyrna has a large Christian population. Thyatira contains 3000 Christians; Pergamos, 8000; Philadelphia, 1000; but Sardis only 40; Ephesus, 3; and Laodicea only 2!—a warning to all Christians to walk in the light whilst they have the light! The whole island of Chio is governed by Christians; and some islands of the Archipelago are inhabited by Christians only. Christians are, however, often oppressed. In the African states of Algiers, Tunis, and Morocco, Christians are made slaves by the natives,

Digitized by Google

who are Mohammedans. It is thought that Rev. ix. 13—19. is a prophecy respecting the Turks as a scourge to the Christian world.

## CHAPTER II.

### BRIEF ACCOUNT OF PERSONS OF EMINENT PIETY.

ALTHOUGH both learning and piety fell to so low an ebb during the nine centuries included in this book, that these may be justly called *the dark ages*, yet from time to time there appeared some eminent Christians, besides the missionaries named in a former section. Like stars in the night, they shone themselves, and they shed a small portion of light for the benefit of others: and as they appeared even in churches into which superstition had made most dangerous inroads, we should observe with peculiar gratitude the effects of divine grace upon their hearts.

GREGORY the Great was born in Rome, of noble parents, who were pious; after his father's decease, he bestowed his riches towards the relief of the poor. He would often say, that "all earthly glory was but miserable, if the owner of it did not seek after the glory of God." He was careful in spending his time, saying, "that he was to give an account of it unto God." He severely reproved the bishop of Constantinople, who wished to be called universal bishop, which Gregory terms, "that name of blasphemy;" but in the year 606, by a grant of the emperor Phocas, the Roman bishops took that title. Gregory used to say of spiritual poverty, "He is poor whose soul

Digitized by Google

is without grace, not whose coffers are empty of money: contented poverty is true riches. Concerning God's omnipresence he observed, "God is never absent, though the wicked have him not in their thoughts." He died in 605.

Isidore, a learned and eloquent Spaniard, bishop of Seville, abounded in mercy and good works. Whilst he wasted his body with labours, he enriched, it is said, his soul with heavenly thoughts. He used to say, "Knowledge and a good life are both profitable: yet if both cannot be obtained, a good life is rather to be sought, than much knowledge." "A man cannot run from himself: a guilty conscience will not forsake him wheresoever he goes." "He that begins to grow better, let him beware lest he grow proud; lest vain glory give him a greater overthrow than his former vices." A little before his decease he caused himself to be carried to the church of St. Vincent, where he made the following confession in the face of all the congregation. "O God, who knowest the hearts of men, and didst forgive the poor publican that stood afar off and smote his breast; . . . receive at this time my confession, and remove from thy sight the innumerable sins I have committed. Remember not, O Lord, the sins of my youth: and because thou hast said, that 'at what time a sinner turneth from his evil ways, all his iniquities shall be forgotten;' I am mindful of thy gracious promise; I call unto thee with hope and confidence, although in respect of my sins, unworthy to look up to heaven: but, O Lord, I beseech thee hear my prayer, and pardon me a sinner. For if the heavens are not pure in

Digitized by Google

thy sight, much more am I impure, who have drank in iniquity like water." After this, he begged forgiveness both of the clergy and people, if in any thing he had injured or offended them; entreating the assistance of their prayers that he might obtain mercy of God, though he confessed himself most unworthy of it. Upon this he was carried home, and he died in peace within three or four days.

Bede was a learned English Saxon, born in the county of Durham. Many of the heathen Saxons were converted by him to the faith; many of the nobility sent their sons to be instructed by him. He wrote Church History, and the History of the Kingdom, &c. Often when he read the Holy Scriptures he was in tears. In his sickness he encouraged himself with the words of the Apostle, Heb. xii. 6. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth;" and when he beheld some of his scholars weeping over him, he comforted them with these words: "The time is come, if my Creator pleaseth, that being freed from the flesh, I shall go to him, who made me when I was not, out of nothing. I have lived long, and the time of my dissolution is approaching; and my soul desireth to see my Saviour Christ in his glory." He died in 735.

Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, wrote against the growing corruptions of the Roman church, particularly her idolatry. Historians speak both of his piety and learning. He discoursed of the Trinity, incarnation, redemption, union of Christ with the church, and of the necessity of grace in



Digitized by Google

order to do well, and resist temptations. He died in the ninth century.

FLORUS, a pious deacon of the church of Lyons, maintained the following truths, referred to in archbishop Usher's works: "Our Lord himself plainly shows that the very first commencement of what good we have is from himself: ye have not chosen me; but I have chosen you ..... God himself both begins and accomplishes what is good in believers. He first loves his saints, in order that they may love him.....Man has not of himself a will to that which is good; neither has he of himself a power to perform a good work. Both one and the other are received from him, of whom the apostle saith, 'It is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.' Through his mercy, he himself is beforehand with the will of man. He himself inspires man with the grace of thinking rightly."

The Saracens having overthrown the Gothic kingdom in Spain, many Christians were made slaves; others preserved the Christian faith in the Asturian mountains; many were martyrs. Perfectus of Corduba, being asked his opinion, said, that he thought Mohammed was an impostor, for which he was beheaded in 850.

In the ninth century PHOTIUS patriarch of Constantinople was a bishop of great learning. He wrote a letter stating the nature of the Christian religion to Bogoris, king of the Bulgarians, who embraced the gospel. MOSES BARAPHA was a very learned man among the Syrians, and RABANUS MAURUS, archbishop of Mayence, in the Latin church. It is to be hoped they possessed also

Digitized by Google

that which is of far greater value than learning, —godliness, compared with which learning and riches, and even the kingdoms of the world and all the glory of them, are but as dust in the balance.

Godeschald, a French monk, having expressed himself in strong terms respecting God's decree of predestination, was not only degraded, but tortured, till he threw one of his own books into the flames. His life was worn out by an imprisonment of more than 20 years.

Alfred the Great, an English monarch, as a warrior, a legislator, and a king, has scarcely any equal in history. He was the patron of learning and founded the university of Oxford. He had useful books written or translated, and spread among his subjects; few of whom, in that age, could write or read. He also translated Bede's Ecclesiastical History, David's Psalter, and part of the New Testament, having died before he could finish it. As a man and a Christian, his benevolence, charity, and devotion, equalled his other excellencies in the camp and on the throne. When he was young, he used to rise in the night, walk privately into the church, and pray to God that he would fortify him with his grace, against his sinful passions.

The Bodleian library at Oxford has preserved a very ancient manuscript, in which are many of the sayings of this excellent monarch, and the following amongst others.

"O that you would now love and long after your Lord! He would govern you wisely, that you might have honour in this world, and yet unite your souls to Christ.



Digitized by Google

"I mildly admonish thee, my dear friend and beloved, whether poor or rich, that thou wholly fear thy Lord CHRIST; love him and delight in him; for he is Lord of life; he is one GOD above all goodness; he is bliss above all blessedness."

The above was originally Saxon verse: the following, in prose, appears to have been a part of Alfred's dying advice to his son Edward.

"My son, I feel that my hour is coming. My countenance is wan. My days are almost done. We now must part. I shall to another world, and thou shalt be left alone in all my wealth. I pray thee (for thou art my dear child) strive to be a father and a lord to thy people; be thou the children's father, and the widow's friend; comfort thou the poor, and shelter the weak; and, with all thy might, right that which is wrong. And, son, govern thyself by law; then shall the LORD love thee, and GOD, above all things, shall be thy reward; call upon him to ADVISE thee in all thy need, and so he shall HELP thee better to do that which thou wouldest."

WINCESLAUS, duke of Bohemia, whose mother Drahomira and brother Boleslaus were pagans, was himself a prince of earnest piety and anxious for the welfare of his subjects. His grandmother Ludmilla, who was a Christian, was strangled in a chapel, by order of Drahomira; and in 929, after Winceslaus had attended some ceremony upon the birth of Boleslaus's child, Drahomira urged her son Boleslaus, the pagan, to murder her son Winceslaus, the Christian. Boleslaus went for this dreadful purpose, found him upon his knees at his devotions, and stabbed him upon the spot.

Digitized by Google

ALPHAGE was a pious archbishop of Canterbury. When the Danes laid siege to that city, the principal inhabitants persuaded him to retreat: "God forbid (said he) that I should tarnish my character by such conduct, and be afraid to go to heaven because a violent death may lie across the passage. . . . . God be thanked, I do not know that I have given the enemy any just occasion to use me ill. 'Tis true, I have converted several of them to Christianity; but if this be a fault I shall be happy in suffering for it. What! have I disobliged them by ransoming some of my countrymen, and by supporting those in their captivity whom I was not able to redeem? If you think the Danes are enraged against me for reproving them for their immorality and injustice, I cannot help that, for unless I give a wicked man warning, his blood will be required at my hands. I think it unbecoming my station, to desert my countrymen in time of danger, and make provision for myself. What can I be less than an hireling, if, when I see the wolf ready to devour my sheep, I presently run away, and leave them to shift for themselves? It is therefore my resolution to stand the shock, and submit to the order of Providence." The town was soon after taken and the inhabitants plundered and murdered. Alphage could not bear to see the poor inhabitants suffer in that manner, and went and begged the Danes to spare the people and turn their rage against him. They slew above 7000 of the people, and put the bishop in a dungeon for several months. They proposed to him to redeem his liberty with the sum of 3000*l.* but



Digitized by Google

Alphage could not satisfy the demand. He was put to death at Greenwich, in 1012.

Gerard, a Venetian, going into Hungary, became acquainted with Stephen, the king of that country, who made him bishop of Chonad. Ouvo and Peter, successors of Stephen, being deposed, Andrew, son of Ladislaus, cousin-german to Stephen, had an offer of the crown made upon condition that he would employ his authority in destroying the Christian religion in Hungary. The prince came into the proposal, but Gerard, being informed of this impious bargain, went to that prince attended by three other bishops, but as the four bishops were going to cross the Danube, they were stopped by soldiers who put them to death with lances, in 1045.

Margaret, sister to Edgar Atheling, the last of the Saxon princes in England, was married to Malcolm king of Scotland, and it is said that she promoted the observance of the Lord's day, and that she was a very humble and heavenly-minded princess. Stephen I. king of Hungary, also, and Casimir who was once in the monastery of Cluny, and afterwards king of Poland, are said to have been religious monarchs.

Stanislaus, bishop of Cracow, was of an illustrious Polish family. Boleslaus, the second king of Poland, giving way to his passions, was very cruel; Stanislaus alone had the courage to tell him of his faults. One day the king, with a dagger, murdered Stanislaus in a chapel, in 1079. Simeon, archbishop of Thessalonica, was a great divine, and so also was Theophylact, archbishop of Constantinople, who exerted himself in what

Digitized by Google

he thought best for the churches, especially in Bulgaria.

ANSELM, an Italian, was archbishop of Canterbury, and a learned and devotional writer, but he was too anxious to uphold the power of the Roman pontiff. He said, "that if he should see the shame of sin on the one hand, and the pain of hell on the other, and must, of necessity, choose one, he would rather be thrust into hell without sin, than go into heaven with sin." He died in the year 1109, aged seventy-six.

BERNARD, born in Burgundy, was made abbot of Clairval: being desirous to save souls, he went about preaching and instructing the people in the neighbouring villages; so that his fame spread throughout those countries, and many came from far to hear his sermons. He wrote many eloquent and pious works. His zeal, in consequence apparently of misinformation, was sometimes directed against persons who had forsaken the church of Rome on account of her corruptions. He died in 1153. He said of ambition, "Ambition is a gilded misery, and secret poison; a hidden plague, the engineer of deceit, the parent of envy and hypocrisy, the moth of holiness, the blinder of hearts, turning medicines into maladies, and remedies into diseases." Upon entering the church at the door he usually said, "Stay here all my worldly thoughts, that I may entertain heavenly meditations."

ERIC, king of Sweden, was reproached because he was a Christian, by some rebellious persons in his kingdom, and being afterwards attacked during public worship, died, commending his

Digitized by Google

soul to God. Louis IX., king of France, was a prince of uncommon excellencies. His mother, Blanche, said, "she would rather see him dead at her feet, than commit sin." When Zenghis Khan, who reigned in Tartary, seemed by his great conquests to threaten all Europe, Louis said to his mother, "What have we to fear? we shall either live conquerors, or die martyrs." He joined in those superstitious undertakings, the crusades, and was taken prisoner. Returning home, he said, "he rejoiced more that God had given him patience in suffering, than if he had conquered the world." In his last hours he prayed for the conversion of those who had not received the gospel.

Pope Celestine V., who resigned the papal throne, and was imprisoned, is said to have been a devout man. Nicephorus, a learned member of the Greek church, wrote an Ecclesiastical History. It was his remark, that "the Saviour asked Peter three times, if he loved him, not for his own information, but that a threefold profession might be made after a threefold denial of his Lord and Master." Eustathius, archbishop of Thessalonica, was a man of uncommon learning.

Robert Grosthead, bishop of Lincoln in 1235, during eighteen years was engaged in repeated disputes with pope Innocent IV. He dared, even in that superstitious age, to reprove the pope himself. Although superstitious he was both a learned and pious man. His works were very numerous. In one work he said, "Grace is that good pleasure of God, whereby he willeth to give us that which we have not deserved, in order to

Digitized by Google

our benefit, not to his. It is manifest, therefore, that all the good which is within us, whether it be natural or freely conferred afterwards, proceeds from the grace of God: for there is no good thing of which his will is not the author; and what he wills is done. He himself averts our will from evil, converts it to good, and causes it to persevere in that good."

Among the Syrians, Gregory Abulpharagius, primate of the sect of Jacobites, was a very learned and excellent man. Bonaventure was an Italian, of noble parentage. His delight was in reading the Scriptures, and the works of the fathers; his behaviour to all men was humble and courteous, and, lest he should be puffed up, he caused to be engraven in his study window this sentence, "Learn of me, for I am meek," &c. When he heard of persons that were troubled in mind, he would give them words of consolation, laying before them the promises of our blessed Saviour, and the gracious desire he had to save sinners, charging them not to give way to despair, but lay hold on the Lord Jesus as the Rock of salvation. He gave himself to meditation and prayer; preached both in and out of season; and was so earnest in the delivery of his sermons, that people came from all parts to hear his lectures. He wrote the Bible over with his own hand. After he had continued at the University of Paris for three years, he was chosen divinity reader. He died in 1274. Bartholomew of Carcassone was a Waldensian pastor of great eminence, who, by truly episcopal labours, established churches in Hungary, Dalmatia, Croatia, Bulgaria, &c.

Digitized by Google

ELEAZAR, count of Arian, in Naples, was a nobleman so anxious for the religious welfare of his household, that he made this rule, "All my family shall be assembled every evening, to hear something of God and salvation. Let none be absent on pretence of attending to my affairs. I have no affairs that concern me so much as the salvation of my servants." What a pattern to masters of families! "If I feel impatience under affronts, (said he,) I look to Christ. Can any thing I suffer, be like to that which he endured for me?" In his last illness, the history of our Saviour's sufferings was read to him. He died at the age of 28.

BRADWARDINE, archbishop of Canterbury, wrote a great work, "The Cause of God," which, next to the Scriptures, chiefly enlightened Wickliffe. In this work he speaks, amongst other things, of the perfections and attributes of God; of the necessity of grace; and proves that without the assistance of God we cannot avoid sin; and that perseverance is an effect of grace. He died in 1350. Nicholas of Lyra, a converted Jew, was a very learned interpreter of the Holy Scriptures.

VINCENT FERRER, another converted Jew, who became a Spanish monk, preached in France, Spain, Italy, England, and Ireland, it is said with great success.

JOHN PICUS, prince of Mirandula, in Italy, was acquainted with many languages. In early life it pleased God to awaken him from a course of sensual delights, and to inspire him with resolutions to shake off all vain-glory, and to devote himself wholly to the glory of God. Many

Digitized by Google

unprofitable writings, which he had written, he burnt, and applied himself to the study of the Scriptures. He wrote upon the Creation, the Sabbath, the Old Testament, and was much delighted with St. Paul's Epistles. He was humble, charitable, and constant in prayer. His usual discourse amongst his friends, was of the uncertainty of all earthly things, and of the stability of heavenly things, and he would often exhort them to love the Saviour above all. He was very desirous of a reformation in the church, and wrote to Maximilian the Emperor, to fulfil his purpose of restoring Christians to their former liberty. He died of a violent fever, in 1494, aged 32. His letters to his nephew contain excellent observations on the means of resisting temptation, and other branches of the Christian life.

Jerome Savonarola, an Italian monk, was distinguished for piety, eloquence, and learning. He wrote many books in favour of morals, piety, and the spiritual life: "In this our most unhappy age (says he) faith so faileth, and supernatural illumination seemeth so nearly to be extinct, that nobody can tell whether that which he most confidently professes to believe, be not rather a notion into which he has been led by education, than that faith, which is the production of supernatural light, which is the proper faith of a Christian." Some articles objected against him were, that he taught free justification through faith in Christ; denied the pope's supremacy; taught that the pope neither followed the life nor doctrine of Christ, but attributed more to his own pardons and traditions, than to Christ's merits. In de-

Digitized by Google

posing Savonarola, an abbot said, "I separate thee from the church triumphant." "From the church militant indeed, (said Savonarola,) from the other you are not able." When asked if he met death with resignation, he said, "Shall not I, a sinner, die cheerfully for his sake, who himself, without sin, submitted to death out of love to me?" He and two more were first hanged, and then burnt to ashes, in 1496.

JOHN WESSEL, of Gronigen, differed also in some doctrines from the church of Rome.

THOMAS A KEMPIS received his surname from a village in the diocese of Cologne. His parentage was mean, and his circumstances narrow. At thirteen he began his studies, and at nineteen retired to a monastery of Augustine monks. He became, at length, prior of a monastery at Zwoll in Holland. The famous book of "The Imitation of Jesus Christ," is commonly ascribed to him. He says in that work, "I desire not that consolation which taketh from me sorrow for my sins; neither do I affect that contemplation which leads to haughtiness of mind: for all that is high is not holy; nor all that is sweet, good; nor every pleasing desire pure; nor every thing dear to us acceptable to God. I therefore willingly receive that grace whereby I may ever become more humble, more diffident, and more ready to renounce myself. He that is taught by the bestowment of divine grace, and corrected by its withdrawment, will not dare attribute any thing good to himself, but rather acknowledge himself poor. Give unto God that which is God's, and unto thyself ascribe that which is thine own:

Digitized by Google

that is, give thanks to God for his grace, and acknowledge that nothing is to be attributed to thyself but sin, and the punishment due unto it."

Thus does it appear that even in churches in which error reigned to a deplorable extent, there were persons who walked with God, and in whose hearts "grace reigned through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."

## CHAPTER III.

### PERSECUTIONS OF THE CHURCH.

### SECT. 1.—*Persecution of the Waldenses and Albigenses in France, Piedmont, &c.*

FROM some of the pages of these Records, it has appeared that in the early ages several bishops of Rome were holy martyrs. By degrees, however, the bishops of Rome, called popes, became worldly-minded, and even cruel persecutors. Even the worship of graven images, contrary to the second commandment, was introduced by the pope's order into Christian churches! Many dreadful abuses prevailed also during these dark ages in the Greek and other churches. The corrupt state of the Roman Catholic church was even the subject of prophecies by St. Paul, (2 Thess. ii. 3—9.) and by St. John. (Rev. xvii. 3—6.) There were pious men (a few of whom were mentioned in the last section) who lifted up their voice against the reigning power of superstition; some were despised, and some were imprisoned, and some were put to death; but there were



Digitized by Google

others who came out of the church of Rome in great numbers, lest they should partake of her plagues, and by continuing in her communion should dishonour that gracious Saviour, who loved them and gave himself for them. None so remarkably distinguished themselves as witnesses for pure and undefiled religion, in opposition to the dreadful corruption of doctrine and practice in the church of Rome, as the Vaudois, called also Waldenses, who dwelt in the valleys of Piedmont in Italy, and like the Israelites in Goshen enjoyed light whilst darkness prevailed elsewhere. By their zealous efforts they gained numerous disciples, called Albigenses and Picards, in France, Lollards, in England, &c. The Vaudois were part of the flock of Claudius, archbishop of Turin, about the year 817, who was an eminently holy man, and who opposed image-worship and other errors. Yet the Vaudois appear to have maintained divine truth long before Claudius's time, even from the first ages of Christianity. The doctrines of the Vaudois may be learnt from the following extracts from an ancient confession of their faith.

"We believe that there is only one God, who is a Spirit, the Creator of all things, the Father of all, who is above all, and in us all, who is to be adored in spirit and truth, upon whom only we wait, and to whom we give all glory for our life, our nourishment, clothing, health, sickness, prosperity, adversity: we love him as the author of all goodness, we fear him as knowing our hearts. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son and image of his Father; that in him dwells the fulness of

Digitized by Google

the divinity: by whom we know the Father; who is our Mediator and Advocate, and there is no other name under heaven given unto men by which we can be saved; in whose name only we call upon the Father, and use no other prayers but those contained in the Holy Scriptures, or agreeing unto them in substance. We believe that the Holy Ghost is our Comforter, proceeding from the Father and the Son, by whose inspiration we make our prayers, being renewed by him, who doth all good works in us, and by him we have knowledge of all truth. We believe that there is one holy church, which is the congregation of all the elect and faithful, which have been from the beginning of the world, and shall be unto the end, whereof our Lord Jesus Christ is the head: the which church is governed by his word, and guided by the Holy Ghost, in which all good Christians ought to remain.....We hold that the ministers of the church ought to be irreprehensible both in life and doctrine, otherwise they are to be deposed from their office, and other to be substituted in their place: and that no man ought to presume to undertake this honourable calling, but only he which is called of God as Aaron.....We confess that kings, princes, and governors are ordained and established ministers of God, whom we are to obey; for they carry the sword for the defence of innocents and the punishment of malefactors; and for this cause are we bound to do them honour, and to pay tribute: from which power and authority no man can exempt himself, as may appear by the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, who refused not to pay tribute, not challenging any



Digitized by Google

jurisdiction of temporal power. We believe, that in the sacrament of baptism the water is the visible and external sign, which representeth unto us that which by the power and virtue of God invisible, so working, is within us, that is to say, renovation of the Spirit, and mortification of our members in Jesus Christ.....We hold the holy sacrament of the table, or supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, to be a holy remembrance and thanksgiving for the benefits which we have received by his death and passion, which is to be received in faith and charity, examining ourselves, that so we may eat of the bread and drink of that cup.....We confess that they that fear God, seek the things that please him, doing good works, the which he hath prepared to the end we should walk in them, which are charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, mildness, sobriety, and other works contained in the Holy Scriptures. On the contrary, we confess that we are to take heed of false teachers, whose end is to call the people from the true worship of God, and to rest themselves upon creatures, putting their confidence in them..... We hold the Old and New Testament for the rule of our faith, and we agree to those articles contained in the symbol of the apostles, which doth thus begin, "I believe in God the Father Almighty," &c. Professing doctrines so scriptural, whilst surrounding countries lay in the gloom of spiritual ignorance and irreligion, the Vaudois might well adopt as they did, for their armorial bearings, "a taper burning in a golden candlestick and scattering its beams in a field of thick darkness."

Digitized by Google

Whilst the Waldenses protested against errors in the church of Rome in the West, Christians appeared in the East who separated from the Greek church. They were called Paulicians, and were followers of Constantine Sylvanus, who, having had a New Testament given him, studied it, and afterwards, about the year 660, planted churches in Armenia, Cappadocia, Asia Minor, &c. Sylvanus was stoned to death. Simeon, a Greek officer sent to apprehend him, when he saw the constancy of the Paulicians as martyrs, became a preacher, and died also a martyr. The Paulicians were persecuted during 150 years. It is said that under the empress Theodora, 100,000 were killed during destructive wars against them. About the year 845 the Paulicians joined the Mohammedans in desolating the Greek provinces. Godliness must then have been very low amongst them. It is thought that many of the Paulicians retired afterwards to Bulgaria, and some from thence to France, in the 11th century.

It seems probable that the Vaudois were joined in the 11th century by ministers of the church of Milan, (called Paterins,) who forsook the Roman Catholic communion because the pope required them to put away their wives. In the 12th century the Vaudois or Waldenses* were greatly increased by the followers of a reformer who arose at Lyons in France, named Peter Waldo, a rich merchant. Whilst conversing with some friends after supper, one of them fell down dead. This led Waldo to think seriously of religion and

* The Vaudois, or Valdenses, or Waldenses, were not called so after Peter Waldo, but because they lived in valleys.

Digitized by Google

eternal things. He gave much alms to the poor, and taught them divine truth. With the assistance of others he translated the Holy Scriptures; and afterwards preached with great success in Dauphiny and Picardy in France. His followers were united as Christian brethren with the Vaudois of Piedmont. Waldo went to Bohemia and died there; entering, we trust, into the joy of his Lord, to shine as a star for ever and ever, after having thus turned many to righteousness. The Vaudois and other defenders of the Christian faith underwent many and severe sufferings. For instance, in 1140, some persons who held private religious assemblies near Cologne were put to death. Thirty Germans, men and women, with their teacher Gerard, fled for refuge to England, but were tried at Oxford, and because they disliked the Roman church were turned into the fields in winter, where they died of cold and hunger. They were enabled, however, by God's grace, to rejoice in tribulation; for amidst their disgrace and suffering they sang, "Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake."

In the 13th century the followers of Peter Waldo suffered exceedingly in France; for example, in Picardy many were burnt, and 300 houses pulled down. At the city of Strasburg 80 were burnt, and 18 at Mentz. A person named Gerhard Segrarelli, a leader of some poor Christians who called themselves apostolic and separated from the church of Rome, was burnt at Parma. One hundred and fourteen of Waldo's followers were burnt at Paris. During the fourteenth century the Vaudois were also dreadfully persecuted,

Digitized by Google

By pope Clement's orders, there was a great slaughter of them in Piedmont; and many fled to Germany, where they also suffered from the rage of the Roman Catholics. These worthy people planted, at different times, churches in Croatia, Dalmatia, Bulgaria, Albania, Constantinople, Philadelphia, Sclavonia, Spain, Hungary, Flanders, Lombardy, Sicily, Milan, &c. and had many thousand disciples. In the south of France, in particular, the efforts of the Vaudois preachers were crowned with great success, and the Albigenses (so called from the city of Albi) abounded from the Alps to the Pyrenees. They agreed in doctrine, and lived in unity with the Vaudois of Piedmont.

A very horrid tribunal, called the Inquisition, was invented by a monk, named Dominic, and the Albigenses (who, through the efforts of some great preachers, Peter de Bruis, Henry, Joseph, Esperon, Arnold Hott, &c. were very numerous) were tortured and burnt by the inquisitors, contrary to all justice. Thousands were thus cruelly put to death. Besides this, the pope encouraged people to make war against them and murder them, by impiously promising to those who should bear arms against them forty days, the joys of Paradise. Simon de Montfort, at the head of 300,000 men, then ravaged the country, during many years, practising most cruel and indecent barbarities. The counts of Thoulouse, however, defended these their excellent subjects. One of the countesses of Thoulouse, Philippa of Moncade, was of the religion of the Albigenses, and enjoyed the consolations of her faith when dying.

Digitized by Google

At Menerbe, a castle near Spain, 140 men and women were burnt for their faith in the Lord Jesus. In another part of France, (Grenoble,) 150 Vaudois were burnt in the course of thirteen years. The sufferings of those people in Piedmont and Dauphiny were, indeed, of the most affecting kind. When pursued in winter by their cruel enemies, at Pragela, situate amidst the Alps, they climbed these mountains; mothers carrying their little ones in cradles. Some were murdered, and some were starved. As many as 180 children were found dead in the cradles, and the mothers died soon after. Again, in 1488, there were murdered above 3000 Vaudois of the valley of Loyse, and 400 children were found suffocated in cradles, or in the arms of their deceased mothers, who had taken refuge in caves. Their enemies set fire to some wood at the mouths of the caves. At an earlier period, in Flanders, Robert, one of the Waldenses, deserted them and became a persecutor. It is related that fifty persons were burnt or buried alive in Flanders, and that others were tormented by means of wasps and bees. On the other hand, some who were persecutors became their friends. Eckard, a German inquisitor and persecutor, being converted to the faith of the Waldenses, preached the truth he before attempted to destroy, and was burnt at Heidelberg. Another person, Walter Lollard, once a Franciscan monk, and a persecutor, became a preacher among the Waldenses, and was burnt at Cologne.

The above account of some of the numerous sufferings of those constant disciples of Christ,

Digitized by Google

the Waldenses, during the dark ages, will give the reader an accurate, though imperfect idea of what they endured. When the Reformation dawned, they sent two ministers, George Morel, of Frassinieres, in Dauphiny, and Peter Masson, of Burgundy, (afterwards a martyr,) to confer with Œcolampadius, Bucer, and other German reformers; and to be the representatives of a people who, though "clothed in sackcloth," had, for many centuries, maintained the truths of the gospel uncorrupted.

## Sect. 2.—*Persecution of the Lollards in England.*

Another branch of Christians who opposed the superstitions of the church of Rome were the disciples of John Wicliffe. It has been supposed that Wicliffe and his followers received some light of Christian knowledge from the Albigenses or Waldenses: since, at the time that the English occupied Guienne in France for 300 years, they were in the immediate neighbourhood of the Albigenses. Besides, Renaud Lollard is said to have come to England as a preacher, as early as the year 1217. The Lollards therefore preceded the Wicliffites, though the latter are usually called Lollards,—a German word signifying psalm-singers. Wicliffe, an Englishman, was educated at Oxford. About the year 1387, he ended his life at his parish of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, of the palsy. He wrote and preached, with great boldness, against the errors in the church of Rome; but is thought to have engaged too much in worldly politics. Besides Wicliffe's other works,

Digitized by Google

he made a translation of the Scriptures. About forty years after his death, Wicliffe's bones were dug up and burnt; and his ashes scattered into a brook, which "conveyed them into the Avon; the Avon conveyed them to the Severn, and the Severn into the ocean: thus becoming (said his biographers) a striking emblem of his doctrine, which spread through many distant countries." The Lollards endured much in the Saviour's cause. A clergyman, William Sawtre, was burnt at London, in 1400. The Lollards often met in St. Giles's Fields to worship late at night. At one time they were attacked; twenty were killed and sixty made prisoners. The preacher, Beverley, and Sir Roger Acton, were hanged and burnt. Abraham, a monk, died a martyr at Colchester. Mr. White, a preacher in Norfolk, died a martyr. John Claydon and his books were burnt in London. John Brown, of Ashford, Kent, was burnt. Six men and a woman were burnt at Coventry, for teaching their children the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments in the English tongue. Thomas Basley and Richard Wick, priests, suffered as Lollards, in London: the latter was a remarkably eminent Christian. In 1440, some persons of rank were imprisoned for life, because Lollards, and amongst them was the Duchess of Gloucester. In 1494, a lady, Joan Boughton, aged 80 years, was burnt in London. Her daughter, Lady Young, suffered death likewise afterwards. In 1506, William Tilfery was burnt at Amersham, and his daughter was compelled to light the fagots to burn her father. A priest named Roberts was burnt at Buckingham;

Digitized by Google

rejoicing that he died for the gospel. In 1507, Lawrence Guale was burnt at Salisbury. These were a few of the many holy witnesses for the truth, called Lollards, "who loved not their lives unto the death."

But the most illustrious martyr among Wicliffe's followers, was JOHN OLDCASTLE, an Englishman, born in the reign of Henry the Fourth, at whose court he was brought up. He was knighted, and, for his service in the wars, honoured with the title of LORD COBHAM. He became very zealous for the gospel, openly reproved the idolatrous worship of the church of Rome, and took the part of the ministers who taught Wicliffe's doctrine. The king sent for Lord Cobham, and desired him to be obedient to the Roman church, and confess his error. He mildly answered, "You, most worthy prince, I am always willing and ready to obey, forasmuch as I know you to be the minister of God, bearing the sword for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well; unto you, next unto my eternal God, I owe all obedience, and submit all that I have unto you, being ready at all times to do whatever you shall in the Lord command me. But as touching the pope, I owe him no suit nor service, knowing him, by the Scriptures, to be. . , . the son of perdition." The king, hearing this Christian-like answer, dismissed him. He was at last cited before the archbishop and the council. When offered absolution, he replied, "He had never trespassed against him, and therefore had no need of his absolution." When told by the council, that unless he would recant, they would condemn him

Digitized by Google

as a heretic, he bid them do as they thought best; then kneeling down, he lifted up his hands towards heaven, and said, "I confess here unto thee, O eternal and everliving God, in my frail youth I offended thee, O Lord, by pride, covetousness, wrath, uncleanness; and many men have I hurt in my anger, and committed many other horrible sins, for which, good Lord, I ask thee forgiveness." Turning to the people, he said, "Lo, good people, for breaking God's laws and his holy commandments they never yet accused me; but for their own laws and tradition they handle me most cruelly, and, therefore, they and their laws, by God's promise, shall be utterly destroyed." He declared, that till he knew Wicliffe and his despised doctrines, he had never abstained from sin,—but afterwards he was able to do so. They read the bill of condemnation against him as a heretic. After which, he, lifting up his eyes towards heaven, said, "Lord God eternal, I beseech thee of thy infinite mercy to forgive my persecutors." After that he was sent to the Tower; but he made his escape, and fled into Wales, where he continued four years, till Lord Powis, under pretence of friendship, betrayed him. The House of Lords confirmed the sentence of the bishops, that he should be drawn through the streets of London, to the gallows of St. Giles in the Fields, and there hanged, and afterwards burnt upon the gallows; which sentence was put in execution. Lord Cobham suffered martyrdom in 1418.

Digitized by Google

## Sect. 3.—*Persecution of the Hussites*

By God's providence, some of Wicliffe's books were carried into Bohemia by the attendants of Anne, queen of Richard II. of England, after the death of that princess, who had piously studied the Scriptures in English. Dr. Huss, rector of the University of Prague, seems to have benefited by Wicliffe's books, so that he would not allow popes to be representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, there had long been opposition to the pope in Bohemia; for though, in the year 967, a princess named Mlada, who had been to Rome, persuaded her brother to receive the dazzling ceremonies of the Roman church, in Bohemia, the people were very unwilling; and many persecutions ensued. In the 14th century, the pope tried to get Latin prayers used, instead of the former prayers in their own language which people could understand. But several great and good men opposed the increasing corruptions in the Bohemian church. Amongst others, John Militsch, a clergyman, of a noble family. His preaching was attended with an extraordinary blessing in the conversion of souls. He preached also in Moravia, Silesia, and Poland, and, though persecuted, he died at last in peace. Conrad Steikna was his friend and fellow-labourer, and an eminent preacher. When he once preached before the ladies of Prague, about their improper dress, they dressed in a more simple and becoming manner. He died in 1369. Matthew Janowsky, the emperor's confessor, was a reformer



Digitized by Google

of the same pious spirit and temper. He died in 1394. At length JOHN HUSS, who has just been mentioned, appeared. By his zealous preaching he won many souls. Afterwards he was cited before the Roman Catholic council of Constance. An extract from one of his letters will show the spirit in which he acted and suffered. Addressing his divine Master, he says,—"O most merciful Christ, draw us weak creatures after thee, for except thou shouldst draw us, we are not able to follow thee. Give us a strong spirit, that it may be ready, and that it may be willing; and although the flesh be feeble, yet let thy grace go before us, go with us, and follow us; for we can do nothing, and much less enter into the death for thy sake." He besought the council, with tears, to show him what errors he maintained, for if there were any thing in his doctrine contrary to the word of God, he would willingly confess his error: but nothing less than his life would satisfy their revenge; they proceeded, therefore, to degrade him, and afterwards condemned him. Upon this, he, kneeling down, prayed to God to turn their hearts, saying, "Lord Jesus Christ, forgive my enemies, by whom thou knowest I am falsely accused; forgive them, I beseech thee, for thy great mercy's sake." In degrading him, they were so cruel as to cut the skin from off the crown of his head with shears; and in order to disannul the emperor's letters of safe-conduct, they made a decree, "that no faith should be kept with heretics." After this, they prepared for his execution, and put a cap upon his head, painted with devils, which he joyfully put on, saying, "That since his Lord and Master

Digitized by Google

wore for his sake a crown of thorns, he would not disdain, for his sake, to wear that cap." When he had put it upon his head, a bishop, standing by, said, "Now we commit thy soul to the devil;" but Huss, lifting up his hands and eyes to heaven, said, "Into thy hands, Lord Jesus, I commend my spirit, which thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood." They then burnt his books, at which he, with a joyful countenance, said to the people, "Think not, good people, that I die for any heresy or error, but through the hatred of mine adversaries." In prayer, he said, "Lord Jesus, assist and help me, that with a constant and patient mind, by thy most gracious help, I may suffer this ignominious death, whereunto I am condemned for preaching thy most holy gospel." When the fire was kindled, he said, with a loud voice, "Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, have mercy upon me:" which he repeated three times, and then the flame stopped his breath. He suffered martyrdom in 1415.

Jerome of Prague, the friend of Huss, was a layman, famous for learning, and admired for great wisdom and eloquence. He was educated at Prague, but visited several universities. At Oxford, he found the works of Wicliffe, and drank in his spirit and principles. When Huss went to Constance, Jerome promised to follow him, in case of danger. He accordingly followed him privately, but, by the letters of Huss, and advice of his friends, (finding he could be of no service,) was persuaded to return. He was, however, prevented by the vigilance of his enemies, who unjustly took him prisoner; and he was brought



Digitized by Google

before the council. They began to charge him with several errors in his doctrine; to which he answered, "That he was ready to answer whatever could be objected against him, and that he would justify what he had taught;" whereupon they cried out, "Let him be burned,"—and the officers were ordered to carry him to prison; where the bishop of Rigen caused chains to be put about his neck and hands, and that he should hang, in a great pair of stocks, by the hands and feet. There he continued eleven days, without touching the ground, being only fed with bread and water; nor would they take him thence, till they had compelled him to subscribe, "that John Huss was justly put to death;" which, to be eased of his torments, he did. He afterwards, through divine grace, truly repented of what he had done, and declared his belief, that Huss was murdered by the enemies of Christ and his holy gospel. This so enraged them, that they passed sentence upon him; after which they put a paper about him, painted with red devils, to make him odious to the people; likewise a paper mitre on his head; all which he took very patiently, saying, "Our Lord Jesus Christ, when he suffered death for me, did wear a crown of thorns upon his head, and for his sake I will wear this cap." As he went to the place of execution, he sung psalms, and coming to the place where John Huss was burned, he, upon his knees, put up his prayers to God. After a while they bound him to the image of John Huss, carved in wood, which they had set up instead of a stake. His last words were—"This soul of mine I offer to thee in the flames, O! Christ my Saviour,"

Digitized by Google

When the wicked members of this council returned home, Pope Martin V. impiously promised them forgiveness of their sins at the hour of death, on condition of fasting every Friday for a year. But is there any other way to obtain forgiveness, except that of repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ? This council and the pope next required the zealous Roman Catholics in Bohemia and Moravia to destroy the Hussites. Hundreds of them were thrown into the mines of Kuttenburgh; others drowned, or burnt. A faithful Hussite clergyman was placed, with three farmers and four boys, upon the dreadful pile. Being exhorted to abjure their heresies, the clergyman answered: "God forbid! we are all willing, if it were possible, to die not only one, but a hundred deaths, rather than deny divine truths, which are so plainly revealed in the Holy Scriptures!" The pile being set on fire, the clergyman clasped the children in his arms, and sung with them a hymn of praise to God, even in the flames. A merchant of Prague, Kraesa, being at an inn at Breslau, in Silesia, had, by some expressions, shown that he favoured the doctrines of Huss; upon which he was imprisoned. A student from Prague was taken up for the same cause, and cast into the same dungeon. The student being cast down, for fear of being put to the rack, Kraesa encouraged him by saying, "My brother! how highly are we honoured, that we are permitted publicly to bear witness of the truth as it is in Jesus. Our conflict is short, our reward eternal. Let us remember our Lord Jesus Christ; how he endured all the bitterness of death for us,



Digitized by Google

when he redeemed us by his holy and innocent blood; and how many witnesses of his truth have suffered martyrdom for his sake!" The student, however, had not the courage to lay down his life for the gospel; but abjured the doctrines of Huss. Kraesa remained firm, and was burnt alive.

In 1419, Wenceslas, king of Bohemia, died, and the crown devolved to the emperor of Germany, Sigismund; but the Bohemians, who had renounced the authority of the pope, would not pay allegiance to him as their king. The emperor, therefore, sent into Bohemia a numerous army, joined by troops whom the popes had invited to a crusade against the Hussites. This was the origin of the Hussite war, which was carried on for thirteen years with inhuman cruelties on both sides. But the Hussites, being a large mixed multitude of different opinions, soon split into parties. The nobles and most respectable inhabitants, with the learned men at Prague, fought only for the restoration of the blessed cup in the holy sacrament; and were therefore called Calixtines. Others, who at first insisted upon the removal of all the Roman Catholic errors, held their religious meetings, for greater safety, upon a mountain, fortified by Ziska their commander, and called Tabor; from which they were named Taborites. They were joined by great numbers holding the same principles, from Bohemia and Moravia. Among these were very sincere followers of John Huss; but they were at length deserted, and even persecuted, by the Calixtines, who differed but little from the Romish church.

Digitized by Google

## Sect. 4.—*Persecution of the Moravians, or United Brethren.*

There was a body of Christians amongst the Hussites who understood much better than others the nature of the gospel of peace, and who never approved of the war, but trusted that God would support his cause and people without carnal weapons. These persons sent a most pressing message to Rokyzan, archbishop of Prague, by his nephew Gregory, begging a reformation in the church. The small and despised flocks of believers, in Bohemia and Moravia, found themselves like destitute orphans, through the refusal of Rokyzan to espouse their cause. The ambitious archbishop was too well convinced of the justice of the cause of these faithful people to leave them as a prey to their adversaries, without feeling some remorse of conscience. He therefore procured from his sovereign, Podiebrad, leave for them to retire to his own domains, at Litiz, on the borders of Silesia and Moravia, which had been laid waste during the war; and there to build a settlement, in which they might enjoy a free exercise of their religion. Upon this, many families, citizens, learned men, and nobles, from Prague, and other places in Bohemia and Moravia, removed to Litiz, where, in a few years, they occupied several villages. They chose some upright Calixtine clergymen to be their teachers, among whom Michael Bradazius distinguished himself. They called the whole body in connexion with them, which comprehended many of the same

Digitized by Google

persuasion in Bohemia and Moravia, "the United Brethren." These quiet Christians, the friends of peace, were in a few years exposed to danger. King Podiebrad himself, who was at first inclined to favour them, was prevailed upon to give his consent to a persecution. Immediately the United Brethren, both in Bohemia and Moravia, were declared outlaws; great numbers spoiled of their goods; the sick were thrown out into the fields, where many died with cold and hunger; others were cast into prison, put to the rack, or burnt. During this persecution, the United Brethren at Litiz sent messengers to strengthen their persecuted brethren in every place, and to exhort them to patience. With this view Gregory, Rokyzan's nephew, came to Prague, where the Brethren being assembled to partake of the sacrament, a judge, who secretly favoured them, sent privately to advise them to depart. Gregory advised that they should not even stay to take their meal, but flee immediately. The rest exclaimed, "No, whoever is steadfast in the faith will not flee. Let us eat in peace, and take what may happen." Some students even boasted that the rack and the stake were trifles to them. They were soon surprised by the officers of justice. The dread of torture now influenced those who had so lately boasted of their fortitude, to deny their profession. But Gregory was not overcome with fear. Being stretched on the rack, he fell into a swoon, so that all present supposed him dead. On hearing this news, his uncle Rokyzan hastened to the spot, and burst into tears, exclaiming, "O, my dear Gregory, would to God I were where thou

Digitized by Google

now art!" Gregory, however, revived, and was released. Rokyzan afterwards became a bitter enemy to "the United Brethren;" the love of the world reigning in his heart. The Holy Scriptures teach us, however, that to listen to the voice of conscience, is more for our happiness than to love the world.

One of the chief concerns of "the United Brethren" was, how the ministerial office might be supplied, after the death of the regular priests, ordained by the Calixtines, in case no more of that communion should join them. This question was discussed in the synod held in the village of Lhota, in 1467, and a resolution taken, to fill the ministerial offices with Brethren of their own persuasion. Nine men of talents and approved piety were chosen, three of whom they appointed, by lot, for the ministry, namely, Matthew of Kunewalde, Thomas of Preschelauz, and Elias of Krschenow. "The United Brethren" being anxious to have their own bishops, applied to the Waldenses, who dwelt, in considerable numbers, in Austria. Stephen, bishop of the Waldenses, with great solemnity consecrated three of their ordained ministers, of whom Michael Bradazius was one, bishops of the Brethren's church.

Some time after this, a persecution arose against the Waldenses in Austria, by which they were dispersed, and their bishop Stephen burnt at Vienna. The return of the new bishops gave the Brethren great joy. Soon after, the three men, chosen for the ministry by lot, were ordained priests, and Matthew of Kunewalde was consecrated the fourth bishop.

Digitized by Google

As soon as it was known that the Brethren had received regular episcopal consecration, and might ordain ministers, a bloody decree was issued, in 1468. The States were required to punish all Picards,* by which name the Brethren were called. The prisons in Bohemia were filled with members of their church. Many perished in dungeons of hunger; others were tortured; the remainder were obliged to hide themselves by day in forests and caves. Fearing to be betrayed in the daytime by the smoke, they kindled fires only at night, around which they employed their time in reading the Scriptures, and in prayer. If obliged to go out in the snow, to seek provisions, they walked behind each other, all treading in the footsteps of the first, and the last dragging brushwood after him, that the track might not be noticed. This persecution did not cease till the death of king Podiebrad, who was succeeded by Wladislas.

In 1510 the persecution was renewed, but was not general. A few faithful Christians suffered martyrdom. A nobleman condemned six Brethren, from the village of Aujest, to the flames. They went cheerfully to the place of execution, and declared, "that they died in the faith of Jesus Christ, their Saviour, who was the only propitiation for the sins of the world, and the only hope of all true believers." The judge, wishing to show mercy to one called Nicholas, offered him a whole year to consider of a recantation. Nicholas replied, that "as, after a year, he could as little think of denying the true faith as now, he

* As Peter Waldo had come to Bohemia from Picardy, his followers were called Picards.

Digitized by Google

would rather die with his beloved brethren, than a year hence by himself."

"The United Brethren" were desirous of entering into closer fellowship with the Waldenses living in their neighbourhood: but before this union could take place, the Waldenses were betrayed to the Romish clergy, by some of their own number, upon which a persecution broke out, and their congregations were dispersed.—Many of them fled to the Brethren at Litiz and Fulnec, in Moravia. During the reign of Wladislas, many men of learning, counts, barons, and others of the nobility, joined the Brethren, and built places of worship for them upon their estates. Thus, about two hundred congregations of the Brethren were established in Moravia and Bohemia. Having procured a Bohemian translation of the Scriptures, they got it printed at Venice; being the first people in Europe who availed themselves of the recent important discovery of the art of printing, and who printed a Bible in the language of their own country. Several years afterwards, Baron Scherotin established a printing-office in his castle at Kraliz, in Moravia, where bishop John Aeneas, assisted by other ministers, was employed for fourteen years in a new translation of the Bible.

In concluding this chapter, a few remarks may be added, which naturally arise from the pages just read. So great, so very great was the ignorance of multitudes during these dark ages, that instead of expecting forgiveness of their sins upon repentance and faith in a crucified Saviour, they expected pardon by going to war against Mohammedans, or building places of worship, hospitals,

Digitized by Google

&c. and others thought, that when they put those Christians whom they supposed heretics to death, they did God service. Instead of trusting in the Redeemer's merits, they even trusted in what they imagined to be the merits of departed saints. A method of devotion was also taught, by which persons were to say the Lord's prayer, and prayers to the Virgin Mary, &c. a great number of times together, reckoning the number by beads; little considering that "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth." On the other hand we have seen, that God was graciously pleased to enlighten many persons with better religious knowledge: and that although they were "reproached for the name of Christ, the Spirit of glory and of God rested upon them." Like the worthies of the Old Testament, mentioned by St. Paul, many of them "wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth;" and, according to the same apostle's injunction, they ran "with patience the race that was set before them, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of their faith."

Reader, whenever you are brought into affliction, think of these sufferers; think also of the support that God's Holy Spirit mercifully afforded them; above all, think of that Saviour whose sufferings alone are meritorious; who is himself "touched with the feeling of your infirmities;" and who, if you are his obedient disciple and follower, will, at last, "receive you to himself, that where he is, there you may be also."

Digitized by Google

# BOOK VII.

## CHRISTIAN RECORDS RESPECTING THE REFORMATION IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE REFORMATION IN GERMANY.

We now come to a brighter century; an "era of light." Although thousands of the Waldenses, Wicliffites, Hussites, &c. enjoyed the spiritual liberty of the children of God, the countries of Europe groaned for still fuller deliverance from the ignorance and superstition under which they lay; and in this century the desirable deliverance arrived.

Martin Luther, a native of Saxony, became sensible of the value of religion, from witnessing the death of a friend, who was killed by lightning when they were walking together. He became an Augustinian monk; but when one John Tetzel from Rome brought the pope's indulgences into Germany, persuading the people that whatever sins they committed, if they would purchase an indulgence, they should have them remitted, this wicked impostor so stirred the zeal of Luther, that he wrote against his indulgences. From this circumstance it was, that Luther became the restorer of the too much forgotten truth, that sinners could only hope for pardon from God on repentance and faith in Christ's merits: and that no



Digitized by Google

man could be justified by his own works, or by the pretended merits of departed saints. Many divines in the university took part with Luther, and he began to preach the reformation openly. When called to appear before the emperor and princes of Germany at the diet of Worms, such was his composure, that on the journey he made a paraphrase of the forty-sixth Psalm, and set a tune to it, which is still preserved and sung in the Lutheran churches. He was, indeed, a man of extraordinary courage in defending divine truth. After some time he printed the New Testament, which he had translated into the German tongue at the castle of Wartzburg; to which place he went to escape from his persecutors, and afterwards called his Patmos. The German princes allowed, that since the pope had neglected reformation in the church, Germany had been greatly enlightened by the sermons of Luther, and that if they should punish him, the people would think they wished to extinguish the light of the gospel. Luther used to say, that "temptation, meditation, and prayer, fitted ministers for usefulness." It is said that he spent three hours every day in private devotion. The following prayer was taken from his lips when near his last moments, "O my heavenly Father, who art the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, thou God of all comfort, I thank thee for having revealed to me thy dear Son Jesus Christ, on whom I believe, whom I have preached and professed, loved and praised; but who is despised and persecuted by the pope and all the wicked. O my heavenly Father, though I must leave this body of clay, and depart

Digitized by Google

this life, I know that I shall remain for ever with thee, and that no one shall pluck me out of thy hand." He had written in his last will, "O Lord God, I thank thee that thou wouldst have me live a poor and indigent person upon earth. I have neither house, nor lands, nor possessions, nor money to leave. Thou, Lord, hast given me wife and children; them, Lord, I give back unto thee. Nourish, instruct, and keep them, O thou, the Father of orphans, and Judge of the widow. As thou hast done to me, so do to them." His daughter Magdalen died before him. When he saw her ready to die, he read to her Isa. xxvi. 19. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise," &c. Adding, "My daughter, enter thou into thy chamber in peace, I shall ere long be with thee." He died in 1546.

MARTIN BUCER, a divine who loved peace and concord, a native of Alsace, and one of the German reformers, after labouring in the reformation at Strasbourg, was sent for into England by archbishop Cranmer, with Fagius, another German divine, and he taught in the schools, and read lectures. In his sickness learned men came to visit him, especially Bradford, who, taking leave of him to go to preach, told him he would remember him in his prayers; whereupon Bucer, with tears in his eyes, said, "Cast me not off, O Lord, now in my old age, when strength faileth me." Soon after he said, "He hath afflicted me sore; but he will never, never cast me off." Being desired to arm himself with faith, and a steadfast hope in God's mercies against the temptations of Satan, he said, "I am wholly Christ's,



Digitized by Google

and the devil has nothing to do with me; and God forbid that I should not now have experience of the sweet consolation in Christ." He was interred by the king's command at Cambridge; but in queen Mary's time his body was taken up, and burnt with that of Fagius. He died in 1551.

GEORGE, prince of ANHALT, betook himself to reading Luther's books, and would often pray with tears to God, to incline his heart to the truth; saying, "Deal with thy servant according to thy mercy, and instruct me in thy righteousness." He was well skilled in the Greek and Hebrew tongues, and, discoursing with learned men about the controversies, found that the reformed churches agreed with what was delivered by the prophets and holy apostles. He then became a Protestant bishop. The last acts of this prince's life expressed his piety; using frequent prayer for himself, and all the princes of that family, and often pondering upon these texts, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c." "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He died in 1553.

GASPAR CRUCIGER was much given to meditation, and was so skilled in the Hebrew tongue, that he was very instrumental in the translation of the Bible. He often contemplated the footsteps of God in nature, saying, that "God was so near unto us, that he might almost be felt with our hands." Considering how changeable earthly things are, he often repeated these words, "All things pass away except the love of God." In his sickness he caused his young daughters to

Digitized by Google

repeat their prayers before him, and then himself prayed fervently for the church and those his orphans; concluding, "I call upon thee with a weak, yet with a true faith; I believe thy promises, which thou hast sealed with thy blood and resurrection, &c."

PHILIP MELANCTHON was Luther's valuable assistant in the Reformation; and when the divines of Paris had condemned Luther's doctrine and books, Philip wrote an apology in Luther's behalf against their rash decree. He was employed in visiting and reforming the churches in Saxony. By the consent of the Protestant princes, he drew up a confession of faith, called the Confession of Augsburg.

When he was first converted, he thought it impossible for his hearers to withstand the evidence of the truth, in the ministry of the gospel; but, after he had been a preacher awhile, he complained that "Old Adam was too hard for young Melancthon." In Luther's sickness, all the care of the church lay upon him, which he so well managed, that the true light of saving knowledge began to spread its rays into most corners of Germany. When he heard by letters of the persecution of some godly men in France, he said, that his bodily disease was not comparable to the grief of the mind for his pious friends, and for the miseries of the church. "I desire," (said he) "to depart for two causes: 1. That I may have the much-desired sight of Jesus Christ, and the church triumphant. 2. That I may be delivered from the disputes of divines." He was indeed of a very meek disposition; and for learning had



Digitized by Google

scarcely his equal. Some of the last words he spoke were to his son-in-law. When he asked him what he would have, he replied, "Nothing but heaven." He died in 1560.

In Prussia, DE POLENTZ, bishop of Samland, encouraged Brisman, Sperat, and Poliander, as preachers of the Reformation, and their success was very great. NICHOLAS AMSDORFF, bishop of Naumbourg, was also an eminent reformer. Amongst the Protestants who suffered because they approved of the Reformation by Luther, were Leonard Keyser, a student, who was burnt, and Peter Spengler, a clergyman, of Schalet, who was drowned in a river, having first preached an excellent discourse, and concluded with a hymn on the 21st verse of xvii. St. John, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."

These are a few of the many great and good men who became reformers in Germany; of whom numbers were prepared for the ministry at the University of Wittenberg, where Luther and Melancthon preached and delivered lectures. It was not to be expected that such a work as the Reformation should be carried on without opposition. Accordingly we find, that the pope and the emperor Charles V. of Germany made violent efforts to crush it. At the diet of Spire, in 1529, a law was made forbidding the Reformation; against which law the princes who favoured the Reformation protested; and hence arose the name of *Protestants*, now so common in Europe.

FREDERIC, JOHN, and JOHN FREDERIC, successively electors of Saxony, and Philip, Landgrave

Digitized by Google

of Hesse, were distinguished protectors of the reformers. At length the pope and emperor engaged in a cruel war against the Protestants, and the two princes, last mentioned, were made prisoners. The emperor likewise appointed a new system of religion called the Interim, which contained some opinions maintained by the Protestants, but chiefly the sentiments of the Roman Catholics; but this plan not succeeding, the emperor renewed the war: he was, however, defeated by Maurice elector of Saxony. The emperor afterwards chose to give up his crown, and, retiring to a monastery in Spain, there ended his life. It is said that he showed an inclination to Protestantism in his last years. Upon finding that he could not get two watches to go exactly together, he ceased to wonder that he was unable to bring men to think exactly alike on religious subjects. His sister Elizabeth, queen of Denmark, was sincerely attached to the Reformation, and suffered much affliction. It is clear, that since even wars were undertaken against the Protestants, the success which it pleased God to grant to the efforts of Luther's friends and followers, in different parts of Germany, in diffusing the pure truth of the gospel, must have been amazing.

It was, however, a very afflicting thing to Luther and the pious reformers, that a sect called Anabaptists arose, who were enemies to the lawful authority of princes, and yet pretended that they were very enlightened Christians. They roused the peasants to a dreadful war against their masters in Germany, in which, it is said,

Digitized by Google

50,000 persons lost their lives. There were many peaceable, pious persons, however, amongst the Anabaptists, and some died in the true spirit of Christian martyrs. Mennon, who joined the sect, acquired great influence, and checked and repressed the fanaticism prevalent amongst them. In Holland they are now called, after his name, Mennonites.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE REFORMATION IN SWITZERLAND AND ITALY.

#### SECT. 1.—*The Reformation in Switzerland.*

AMONGST the first reformers of Switzerland we find THOMAS WITTENBACH, of Bienne, who was also of the University of Basil. It was under him that ZUINGLIUS received instruction. When a Franciscan friar, sent by the pope to sell indulgences, came into Switzerland, Zuinglius opposed him, plainly proving him to be a deceiver of the people, and persuading them to keep him out of Zurich. In 1520, the senate of Zurich, at the instance of Zuinglius, commanded the reformed ministers to preach freely, and frame their doctrine according to Scripture. All images in churches were taken down and burnt. Zuinglius was killed in 1531, attending the army in a battle between the Roman Catholic and Protestant cantons: he was thrice overthrown, and still got up again, but being, the fourth time, pierced with a spear, he fell upon his knees, and said, "Well, they can kill the body, but cannot kill the soul."

Digitized by Google

In his sentiments upon the Lord's Supper, he and many others differed from the followers of Luther. But Bucer, Melancthon, and other holy men, endeavoured to promote love and unity among them. When the soldiers came to strip the slain, Zuinglius was found alive, lying upon his back with his eyes up to heaven; they asked if he would have a priest to confess him; he answered, "No:" they bade him call upon the Virgin Mary, which he refused to do; they then killed him with a sword.

He was succeeded in the church of Zurich by BULLINGER, a learned and pious writer, and kind friend to the persecuted Protestants of France and England. When his death was at hand, he said, "If the Lord will make any further use of me and my ministry, I will willingly obey him. but if he pleases (as I much desire) to take me out of this miserable life, I shall exceedingly rejoice to be taken from this corrupt age, to go to my Saviour Christ. Socrates" (said he) "was glad when his death approached, because he thought he should go to Hesiod, Homer, and other learned men deceased, whom he expected to meet in the other world: how much more do I rejoice, who am sure that I shall see my Saviour Christ, the saints, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and all holy men which have lived from the beginning of the world. Since I am sure to partake of their felicity, why should not I be willing to die, to enjoy their perpetual society in glory?"

WOLFGANG CAPITO sowed the seeds of the Reformation at Basil. He was succeeded by the learned and pious Œcolampadius. When Œco-

Digitized by Google

lampadius was dying, he sent for the ministers of the gospel and spoke thus: "My brethren, what shall I say unto you, (whom the love of God your master, and the same study and doctrine have most intimately united,) now that I am to take my leave of you? Salvation, hopes of heaven, truth, light for our feet, are procured by Christ for us. Lead your whole life as under the eye of God. In vain do we press to holiness, if our words be without deeds: there is need of the light of life, and the heavenly spirit, if we would confound Satan, and convert this world unto Christ the Lord. I am just now going before the tribunal of Christ, and that (through grace) with a clear conscience. There it will appear that I have not seduced the church." The night before he died, when a friend returned to him, Œcolampadius asked him, what news he had brought? His friend answering, "None:" "I will tell you some, then," (said Œcolampadius,) "I shall presently be with my Lord Christ." Soon after, being asked, Whether the light hurt him? He put his hand to his heart, and said, "Here is abundance of light."

As early as the year 1522, SEBASTIAN HOFFMEISTER preached the doctrines of the Reformation at Schaffhausen and St. Gal, with great success.

BERTHOLD HALLER was the reformer of Berne. This was after Zuinglius began to preach at Zurich, by whose ministry Haller was converted.

WILLIAM FAREL was born in France, and sent to Paris to be educated. He was one of the first that made a public profession of the gospel in

Digitized by Google

France; but when the persecution arose, he fled to Switzerland, and propagated the gospel at Geneva, Lausanne, and Neufchatel, being eloquent and powerful in preaching. In reforming the church of Geneva, he was assisted by Anthony Froment, Peter Viret, and Calvin. Farel died in 1553.

John Calvin, a great instrument in reforming France and Geneva, was also born in France. By means of a minister of the Waldenses, called Robert Olivetan, his kinsman, a translator of the French Bible, Calvin saw into the errors of the Romish church. He continued, both by preaching and writing, a renowned defender of the cause of Christ till his death in 1564, and many able ministers were educated under him, at Geneva.

Vergerio was so learned in law and divinity, that pope Clement the Seventh sent him as his legate into Germany, where he opposed the Lutherans. He went from Germany to Rome, and from Rome to Germany so often, that the pope, for his great service, gave him a bishopric. He designed to write a book with this title, "Against the apostate Germans:" but God so ordered it, that whilst reading over his adversaries' books, to confute them, he was converted; so he retired to his brother the bishop of Pola, and communicated with him so far, that, through divine grace, he wrought his conversion also from false doctrine, and they became zealous preachers of the Reformation. Vergerio evangelized the Grisons. He died in 1565.

Digitized by Google

## Sect. 2.—*The Reformation in Italy.*

The Reformation, in some measure, reached even Italy itself. A great divine, Peter Martyr, who afterwards lived and died at Oxford, was one chief instrument of enlightening many in that country. But persecutions soon became the lot of the Italian believers. Encenas, a Spaniard, was burnt at Rome. Faninus, a learned layman, was first induced to deny the Protestant faith, and was delivered from prison; but though his body was at liberty, his soul became imprisoned, and the chain of an accusing conscience bound him fast. By God's grace, he recovered from this fall, and again professed the Protestant faith, although he might suffer death. Being asked, why he would leave his wife and children in distress, he replied, "I shall not; I have recommended them to the care of an able and faithful Guardian;" meaning his Saviour Jesus Christ. He was strangled, and then his body was burnt. Before his death, a person said, "It is strange that you should be cheerful, since the Lord Jesus Christ himself, just before his death, was in an agony, so that his sweat was as drops of blood falling to the ground." He replied, "Christ sustained pangs and conflicts with hell and death on our account; and thus, by his sufferings, freed those who believe in him from the fear of them." When the friars offered him a crucifix, he refused the help of such a piece of wood to remind him of his Saviour Christ, "who was already imprinted on his mind and heart, and there had his habita-

Digitized by Google

tion." Dominicus, a learned soldier, became afterwards a preacher at Placentia, and a martyr, professing that, "For the doctrines of Christ he would forfeit his blood, and even think himself happy to suffer for his Redeemer's sake." He was hanged. Galeacius, a firm Protestant, was burnt at Rome, and continued steadfast, although he was chained to the stake several hours before fire was put to the wood, that his wife and relations might persuade him to deny the truth. At Venice many died martyrs, and amongst others, Francis Spinola, a learned author, Francis Sega, and Anthony Ricetti, who were drowned. When news was brought to Sega that he should die that evening, and Spinola had prayed with him, Sega told him his soul was much distressed. Spinola said, "Fear not, for it will not be long before it shall feel those joys which shall endure for ever." When Sega was in the boat, a friar persuaded him to return into the right way. "I am" (said he) "already in the way of our Lord Jesus Christ." Spinola, at his second appearance before his judges, reproved the pope's legate, and the lords of Venice, because, contrary to their consciences, they so persecuted the truth of God. Spinola went cheerfully to be drowned, strengthened by the hope of that eternal happiness in heaven, from which longer life on earth would but detain him. Ricetti's son begged him to forsake the Protestant faith, that his life might be spared. He replied, "I am resolved to sacrifice every thing in this transitory world, for the sake of salvation in a world that will last to eternity. A Christian is bound to leave, not only goods and children, but



Digitized by Google

life itself, for the glory of his Redeemer." The lords of Venice offered to recover his estate and give it to him, if he would become a Roman Catholic. He replied to these noblemen, that "he valued his soul above all other things." Mollius, a very celebrated preacher, was, for his sermons on the Epistle to the Romans, and sentiments contrary to the pope's, hanged and then burnt, at Rome, in 1553. Francis Gamba was burnt at Milan, after his tongue had been bored through, because he refused a crucifix which a monk presented to him, saying, "My mind is so full of the real merits and goodness of Christ, that I want not a piece of wood to put me in mind of him."

Pomponius Algerius, a student in the university of Padua, was a prisoner at Venice, before he was burnt at Rome. He wrote thus from Venice to Christians at Padua; "To mitigate your sorrow, which you endure for me, I cannot but impart to you some portion of my joys, that you may rejoice with me.—I will utter that, which scarce any will believe: I have found a honeycomb in the entrails of a lion. In the deep dark dungeon, I have found a paradise of pleasure: in the place of sorrow and death, tranquillity of hope and life. When others weep, I rejoice; in strait bands, and cold irons, I have had rest. Behold, he that was once far from me, now is present with me; whom once I saw afar off, now I behold near at hand. He removes all bitterness; he imparts strength and courage.—O how easy and sweet is the Lord's yoke! Learn, ye well-beloved, how amiable the Lord is, how meek

Digitized by Google

and merciful, who visits his servants in trials, nor disdains to keep company with us in such vile and loathsome caves. Will the blind and unbelieving world (think you) believe this? or rather will it not say thus? No, thou wilt never be able to abide long the heat and hardships of that place, &c. The rebukes and frowning faces of great men how wilt thou endure? Dost thou not consider thy pleasant country, the riches of the world, thy kinsfolk, the pleasures and honours of this life? Dost thou forget the solace of the sciences, and the fruit of all thy labours? Wilt thou thus lose all the labours, which thou hast hitherto sustained? Finally, fearest thou not death which hangs over thee? But now to answer: Let this blind world hearken to this again, What heat can there be more burning, than that fire which is prepared hereafter? What things more hard, and sharp, and crooked, than this present life which we lead? And let these worldly men here answer me:—What country can we have more delightful than the heavenly country above? What treasures more rich or precious than everlasting life? and who are our kinsmen but they which hear the word of God? Where are greater riches, or dignities more honourable, than in heaven? And as for the sciences, are not they ordained that we may know God? whom unless we do know, all our labours, our night-watchings, our studies, and all our enterprises here, serve to no purpose; all is but labour lost. Further let worldly men answer me:—What remedy or safe refuge can there be to him who is without God, who is the life and medicine of all men? and how can he be said to



Digitized by Google

fly from death, when he himself is already dead in sin? If Christ be the way, truth, and life, how can there be any life without Christ? In this world there is no mansion firm to me, and therefore I will travel up to the New Jerusalem. If to die in the Lord be not to die, but to live most joyfully, where is the worldly man that blames us, for giving away our lives unto death? O how delightful is this death to me! to taste of the Lord's cup! God forbid I should deny Christ, where I ought to confess him; I will not prefer my life to my soul; nor will I exchange the life to come for this present world."

Amongst the Italians who were steadfastly attached to the Reformation, was Galeacius Carracciolus, marquis of Vico, who was born at Naples. The alteration being observed in Naples, some judged it melancholy, and others folly, but they who were the happy instruments of his conversion, rejoiced at so great a change in one of his dignity. Many enemies this alteration procured; even his father and wife became such, for she would by no means change her religion, lest scorn and infamy should attend her. Amidst many temptations, God fortified him with such Christian courage, that he foiled the tempters. Seeing himself forsaken by all relations and friends, and finding that Naples was now for him no abiding city, he resolved to leave his country, friends, goods, and honours, to embrace the truth, rather than to enjoy them all, without the favour of God. He departed from Naples, and arrived at Geneva, at which time he composed the following prayer:—"Thou, Lord, hast drawn

Digitized by Google

me out of the mystic darkness of ignorance, enlightening my mind with thy Holy Spirit, and with the heavenly knowledge of thy truth; thou hast made known to me the way of salvation; hast ransomed me to thyself by the blood of thy Son: now, therefore, Holy Father, I am only thine; consecrated to thy glory; therefore I will follow thee and obey thee, and walk in thy ways whithersoever thou shalt be pleased to call me. Not my father, wife, children, honours, lands, riches, nor all my delights and pleasures, shall keep me one hour from following thee. I deny myself, and I deny this whole world, for thy sake. O Lord, thou knowest how many enemies compass me, how many hinderances and temptations lie in my way: O Lord, have mercy upon me, and deliver my soul!—Blessed and happy are these miseries which draw me out of the world's vanities, and a sink of sins, that I may be made an heir of everlasting glory; welcome, therefore, the cross of Christ! I will take it up, O Lord, and will follow thee."—When entreated to return home, he told his father "he could not, without making shipwreck of a good conscience." He died in 1592.

Olympia Fulvia Morata was also an Italian Protestant. She was educated in the court of Ferrara, under her father, who was preceptor to the young princes of that house. She excelled in the knowledge of Latin and Greek. On the death of her father, she married Dr. Grunthler, a German physician, with whom she left Italy, and was afterwards converted to the Protestant religion. The following is her own account of



Digitized by Google

this happy event, in a letter to a princess of the house of Ferrara.—"When, by the particular goodness of God, I was delivered from the idolatry of my own country, and had retired with my husband into Germany, the change made by his grace upon my heart, could I express it, might seem almost as incredible to you, as it is astonishing to me. The dislike I once had to the Scriptures, from which I always kept, and was taught to keep, at the greatest distance, was turned into the greatest delight and pleasure I had in the world; and now my soul is principally engaged in this most blessed study." After this, she settled in Heidelberg, where she died in peace and triumph, declaring she was "all joy," in the hour of death.

Notwithstanding these promising appearances of the progress of truth, the pope, and those who liked his authority, took such severe methods to crush the Reformation in Italy, that it could not be established in that country.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE REFORMATION IN SWEDEN AND DENMARK.

THE heroic and truly great Gustavus Vasa, upon receiving the crown of Sweden, favoured the Reformation in his dominions. Olaus and Lawrence Petri, two brothers, who had studied under Luther, at Wittenberg, were the honoured instruments of first preaching the doctrines revived by that great reformer. Lawrence Petri was afterwards archbishop of Upsal. This ex-

Digitized by Google

cellent archbishop, his brother, and Lawrence Andreas, translated the Bible into the Swedish tongue.

Christian II. of Denmark was a very cruel king, but he favoured the Reformation, and sent for ministers from Saxony. The New Testament was also translated into Danish. When he was expelled the throne, his queen, Elizabeth, (who has been mentioned already as a pious Protestant, though the sister of Charles V.) was so beloved, that she was offered the crown. She replied, "that she would rather wander in exile, and taste the cup of misery with her husband, than reign without him." Frederic, the next king of Denmark, and his son Christian III. also promoted the Reformation. George Johannes, and John Tausson, disciples of Luther, were eminent preachers; and John Bugenhagen, the friend and fellow-labourer of Luther, being sent for, set all things in order that concerned the Protestant faith in the kingdom.

To this brief account of the Reformation in Sweden and Denmark, may be added, that John Æpinus, an eminent reformer, was exceedingly useful in establishing true religion at Hamburgh; that Henry Muller, a zealous preacher, was burnt at Ditmarsen; and that Henry Zutphen, after being very successful at Breme, was sent for to preach at Diethmar. Having heard that death was threatened if he preached, he answered, that "since he was come, being sent for by the whole congregation, to preach the gospel of Christ, he would fulfil that vocation, because he ought rather to obey the word of God than man: and, if it

Digitized by Google

pleased God that he should lose his life in Diethmar, there was as near a way to heaven as in any other place."

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE REFORMATION IN FRANCE.

The progress of the Reformation in France has been partly attributed to the revival of learning in that kingdom, under Francis I. Many learned men flocked together under his government. Pure religion never shuns the light: the more it is searched, the more its excellencies appear; but superstition hates the light, lest her deeds should be reproved.

Olivetan, who was related to Calvin, and a minister in the valleys of Piedmont, translated the Scriptures into French, and they were soon put into the hands of many persons, and taught to children. It is honourable to the Waldenses, not only that they made the first French translation of the Bible, but, poor as they were, even printed it at their own expense for the use of the French Protestant church. David's Psalms were also translated, and set to solemn tunes; and sung even at court.

The Reformation began at Meaux, where the bishop, William Brissonet, encouraged James le Fevre de Etaples, William Farel, and Gerard le Roux, as preachers of the truth. A persecution soon arose; and the members of the church at Meaux were dispersed through France.

John le Clerc, founder of the reformed church

Digitized by Google

at Metz, in Lorraine, after suffering the most cruel treatment, was burnt alive, in that place, in 1524. Francis, who at first favoured the reformation, became afterwards, through the influence of the Roman Catholic priests, a persecutor. Dionysius de Rieux, who was burnt at Meaux, in 1528, for saying, "That the mass is a plain denial of the death and passion of Christ," used to think often of the words of Christ, "He that denieth me before men, him also will I deny before my Father."

Aymond de Lavoy, a French minister of Bordeaux, said to his friends, "It is the office of a good shepherd, not to fly in time of peril, but rather to abide the danger, lest the flock be scattered; or lest, in so doing, he should leave some suspicion in their minds, that he had fed them with dreams and fables, contrary to the word of God." In prison he comforted himself thus: "This body must once die, but the spirit shall live. The kingdom of God abideth for ever." When the judges left him, he said with St. Paul, "Who shall separate me from the love of God?" As he was carried to the place of execution, he sang Psalm cxiv, and preached still as he went. At his execution, he said to some friends, "I exhort you to learn the gospel, for the word of God abideth for ever. Labour to know the will of God, and fear not them that kill the body, but have no power upon your souls. My flesh lusteth against the spirit, but shortly I shall cast it away. I beseech you, pray for me. O Lord, my God, into thy hands I commend my soul."

In 1535, the king himself assisted in person,

Digitized by Google

bareheaded, in a grand procession at Paris, where he witnessed the burning of six of his Protestant subjects. His sister Margaret, queen of Navarre, protected, as far as she was able, the reformers, James le Fevre, and Gerard le Roux, and even sent for Capito and Bucer to assist in spreading divine truth. Peter Viret, a mild but eloquent preacher, did great service in this respect.

A Dominican friar was burnt at Agen, in the year 1539, and was the first martyr of the reformation in that city. At Nonnay, in Vivarais, a man was likewise burnt for having refused to kneel down before an image upon the highway, as he was going to the fair of Lyons. In 1540, and 1541, many suffered. In 1543, the parliament of Rouen condemned four to be burnt. That of Paris would not permit the sale of Calvin's Christian Institutes. Peter Bonpain, who had raised a congregation at Aubigny, was burnt at Paris. The parliament of Rouen condemned Husson, an apothecary of Blois, to be burnt for having dispersed some books on religion. He suffered martyrdom with such constancy, that many were induced to examine the books for themselves, and several, in consequence, embraced the reformed religion.

In 1546, Peter Chapot brought a number of Bibles to France, and sold them, for which he was burnt. Fourteen persons were burnt alive at Meaux. Francis D'Augy was burnt at Nonnay by the sentence of the parliament of Toulouse. John l'Anglois, an attorney, member of the church at Sens, was condemned at the re-

Digitized by Google

quest of his uncle, Barville, archdeacon of the cathedral.

Henry II. attended, like his father, in a solemn procession; after which, many were put to death on the Place de Grève. Among the illustrious sufferers in this reign, one at Lyons deserves particularly to be noticed. Lewis de Marsac, a gentleman of great family, having been in the king's service, the lieutenant wished to excuse him from dying with a rope round his neck, like the other sufferers. Marsac, perceiving that his rank had gained him this privilege, and that he was to be more favoured than his brethren, desired that no distinction should be made. "Don't" (said he) "deny me the collar of that most excellent order." Simon Lalve was executed at Dijon, and while he was praying for his persecutors, his executioner was smitten to the heart, and embraced the faith of the reformed. Peter Serre, who had been a Roman Catholic priest, saw his errors, and became a shoe-maker to maintain himself. Having gone to Toulouse, where his brother lived, his brother's wife informed against him, and he was burnt. A Genoese youth, named Thomas, having rebuked a Roman Catholic for swearing, was burnt as a heretic, at Paris. In 1557, a congregation having been discovered at worship in Paris, was surrounded, and many were seized. Nine were burnt, among whom was Philippa de Luns, a lady in the 28rd year of her age, who was widow of a nobleman in Gascony. Before her death, her tongue was cut out, and her feet and face were parched; she was then strangled, and her corpse was burnt to ashes. King Henry II. said,

Digitized by Google

he would see du Bourg, a celebrated counsellor, put to death; but a lance ran into his eye, at a tournament, and he died in consequence. Francis II. succeeded him on the throne, and, having cruel advisers, continued the persecutions. Du Bourg was strangled. When he ascended the place of execution, he offered up this prayer: "O Lord, my God! forsake me not, lest I forsake thee!" His body was reduced to ashes!

In 1560, Charles IX., then ten years of age, ascended the throne, and the affairs of the State were committed to his artful and cruel mother, Catharine de Medicis. The Protestants had now above two thousand one hundred and fifty congregations in France. The noble family, which had long been the worst enemy of the Protestants, was that of the Dukes of Guise. The Duchess of Guise lived at Vassy, a town in Champaigne, where there was a reformed church of about twelve hundred members, and Leonard Morel was their minister. The Duchess provoked her son against this religious assembly; and a body of armed men fell upon them in the time of worship, cutting some to pieces, and firing upon those who climbed upon the roof of the barn. Two hundred were wounded, and sixty killed upon the spot. The minister was among the wounded, the Bible was torn to pieces, and some houses in the neighbourhood were plundered. Soon after began a civil war, in which fifty thousand Protestants perished, the duke of Guise was assassinated, and the king of Navarre killed at a siege. In Provence, about fifteen hundred men, women, and children, were destroyed in 1553, in various cruel and indecent

Digitized by Google

ways. At Amiens, the Bibles and Psalm Books of the Protestants were burnt, and several of the congregation. At Abbeville, a nobleman named Harcourt, and others, were slain. Four hundred were killed at Meaux. At Angiers, a minister and several others were murdered, and the Bible carried on an halberd through the streets, and thrown into the river. Three hundred of the reformed were shut up in their church, at Tours, for three days without food; and were afterwards brought near the river, and put to death. The children were sold at a crown apiece. At Tours, one hundred and forty Protestants were thrown into the river. A mother with an infant, and a daughter aged sixteen, were driven into the river. An officer who was there, offered to marry the girl if she would forsake her religion. "My child," (said her mother) "let no worldly temptation cause you to deny the truth, at the expense of your eternal salvation!"——The daughter, who hesitated at first, afterwards said, "I will be steadfast in the truth, die with my mother, and disregard both threats and promises." When a widow of Tours was at the place of execution, her relations brought her children, and begged that she would spare her life to protect them. Having embraced and wept over her little ones, she returned them to the relatives, saying, "I love my children dearly, but neither my love for them, nor any thing else in this world, shall induce me to renounce God. He will be a father to them, and will take better care of them than I could possibly do: to his providence and protection I therefore recommend them." At Rheims, five hundred, it



Digitized by Google

is said, were hanged, and numbers suffered in other parts of France. At Toulouse, the Catholics wore white crosses, and marked their door-posts, that they might save their houses from plunder. The reformed armed for their own defence: and the contest lasted four days, during which time about four thousand persons perished on both sides, and two hundred houses were burnt to the ground. The reformed at length escaped from the town; but many of them were killed by parties lying in ambush on the roads, and their bodies were left to be devoured by the wolves and dogs. Four hundred who remained behind, were beheaded, and some were first put to the torture. Two young boys were among the sufferers, the one thirteen, and the other fifteen years of age, who, because they would not renounce the reformed religion, were both hanged.

We now come to far more dreadful scenes in the year 1572. Thinking to put an end to civil war, the Protestants consented to an union between the young king of Navarre, afterwards Henry IV. and the sister of Charles IX. The marriage was celebrated, and the principal Protestants of the kingdom were assembled in Paris on the occasion, and amongst others, Jane, queen of Navarre, mother of Henry. She fell sick at this time, at Paris, and died after a very short illness, during which she discovered great piety. "I believe' (said she) "that Jesus Christ is my only Mediator and Saviour, and I look for salvation from no other, knowing that he hath abundantly satisfied for the sins of all his people; and therefore I am assured that God, for his sake,

Digitized by Google

and according to his gracious promise in him will have mercy upon me. O my God, in thy good time, deliver me from this body of death, and from the miseries of this present life, that I may no more offend thee, and that I may attain to the felicity which thou hast promised." Farther, she said, "I take all this as sent from the hand of God, my most merciful Father; nor have I, during this extremity, feared to die, much less murmured against God for inflicting the same upon me, knowing that whatsoever he doth, he doth the same so as that all in the end shall turn to my everlasting good. I depend wholly upon God's providence, knowing that all things are wisely disposed by him. As for this life, I am, in a good measure, weaned from the love of it, by reason of the afflictions that have followed me from my youth hitherto; but especially because I cannot live without daily offending my good God, with whom I desire to be with all my heart. My life is not dear to me, since, so long as I live in this frail flesh, I am still prone and apt to sin against God. My only care is for my children, which God hath given me, because they will now be deprived of me in their younger years; yet I doubt not, that if it should please God to take me from them, he will himself be a father to them, and a protector over them, as he hath been to me in my greatest afflictions, therefore I commit them wholly to his government and fatherly care." Some think she was poisoned, because a firm Protestant. —How cheerfully was this pious queen prepared, to leave the splendour and festivity of an earthly court, at the marriage of her son, for a mansion in heaven!



Digitized by Google

One of the principal men among the Protestants was admiral Coligni, who had become a Protestant from reading the Bible and other books, whilst a prisoner of war. He commanded the Protestant armies. His brother Andelot was imprisoned and poisoned on account of being a Protestant. A few days after the queen of Navarre's death, Admiral Coligni was wounded by a musket, in the streets of Paris. To Merlin, his chaplain, he said, "These wounds, my friend, are God's blessings. The smart, indeed, is troublesome, but I acknowledge the will of my Lord therein, and I bless the Divine Majesty, who hath been pleased thus to honour me, and to lay any pain upon me for his holy name's sake: Let us beg of him, to enable me to persevere to the end."

At midnight, on the eve of St. Bartholomew, 1572, the bell was rung, as the signal for the death of the Protestants. The admiral being told of his danger, said,—"I perceive what is doing. I was never afraid of death; and I am ready to undergo it patiently, as I have long since prepared myself for it. I bless God I shall die in the Lord, through whose grace I am elected to a hope of everlasting life. I now need no longer any help of man. You, therefore, my friends, get hence as fast as you can. . . . . The presence of God, to whose goodness I recommend my soul, which will presently fly out of my body, is abundantly sufficient for me." A band of ruffians rushed into his chamber and killed him. When Coligni at one time lost part of his property, he said, "By the grace of God, my soul is of such a frame,

Digitized by Google

that I possessed my goods, but have not suffered them to possess me. My property was my subject, and not my soul the subject of my property." A man so spiritually-minded, was well prepared for martyrdom. His head was cut off, and taken to the cruel queen mother; his body, after it had been dragged through the streets, was hanged without the city. After him, they slew many great and honourable persons, who were Protestants: as count Rochefoucault, Teligni the admiral's son-in-law, the marquis of Ravely, &c. &c. and falling upon the common people, they continued the slaughter for many days. Probably they slew, of all ranks and conditions, to the number of 6000. The bodies were thrown into the river, till it appeared like blood. Peter Ramus, a very learned man, fell in this massacre. After his conversion he daily read the Old and New Testament, and out of each chapter collected rules and examples relating to faith and practice. When mortally wounded, he was heard to commend his soul to God in these words; "O Jehovah, against thee only have I sinned, and done evil before thee. Thy judgments are truth and righteousness. Have mercy upon, and pardon my murderers; for they know not what they do." De la Place, president of the Court of Requests, perceiving in his son's hat a white cross, which through infirmity he had placed there, thinking to save himself, required him to pluck that mark thence, telling him, "We must now submit to bear the true cross of Christ."

From Paris the destruction spread to all quarters of the realm. For instance, at Orleans,



Digitized by Google

a thousand were slain of men, women, and children, and 6000 at Rouen. At Meaux, two hundred were put into prisons, brought out one by one, and murdered. At Lyons, eight hundred were massacred. Francis le Bossu, to encourage his children to suffer martyrdom with himself, said to them, "Children, it hath always been the portion of believers to be hated, and cruelly used, by unbelievers, as sheep by ravening wolves; if we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with him. Let not these drawn swords terrify us, they will be but as a bridge, whereby we shall pass from a miserable life into immortal blessedness. We have breathed, and lived long enough among the wicked; let us now go, and live with our God." He and his two sons were killed, embracing each other, at Lyons.

At Rome the horrid joy was so great, that the Pope appointed a day of festival, and the man who first carried the news, received 1000 crowns of the cardinal of Lorraine for his message. But there were some Roman Catholics who strongly condemned the above perfidy and cruelty. Hennuyer, bishop of Lisieux, refused to encourage the massacre in his diocese, and protected the Protestants. Montmorrin, governor of Auvergne, refused to put the Protestants to death; and even the common executioner at Troyes said, when commanded to murder them, "that he was only obliged to execute those who had been lawfully condemned."

In a civil war which afterwards took place, many thousand Protestants, at Rochelle, perished by famine when the city was besieged. A lady

Digitized by Google

who lived near that city was strangled, because she would not burn her Bible. At length, Henry, king of Navarre, at whose marriage the above massacre took place, but who was himself spared, succeeded to the throne of France; and though he became a Roman Catholic, he granted religious liberty to the Protestants by the edict of Nantes.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE REFORMATION IN THE BRITISH DOMINIONS.

#### SECT. 1.—*Henry VIII.'s opposition to the pope, and persecution of Protestants.*

KING Henry VIII. deprived the pope of his power as head of the church in England, but the Reformation was not begun by Henry; for though the king had cast off the pope's supremacy, yet he retained his doctrine, so that numbers on each side were put to death. Two of Henry's queens, Anne Boleyn, and Catharine Parr, favoured the reformers. Henry himself, however, only separated the church of England from that of Rome, and destroyed the monasteries, &c. One chief instrument in promoting the separation, was Cromwel, earl of Essex, whom Henry VIII. once esteemed, but afterwards, for political reasons, put to death. This earl was not, therefore, strictly a martyr. He said, in his prayer on the scaffold,—"O Lord Jesus, who art the only health of all men living, and the everlasting life of them which die in thee; being sure that the thing cannot

Digitized by Google

perish, which is committed to thy mercy, willingly now I leave this frail and wicked flesh, in sure hope that thou wilt in better wise restore it to me again at the last day in the resurrection of the just. I see and acknowledge there is in myself no hope of salvation, but all my confidence, hope, and trust is in thy most merciful goodness.—Thou, merciful Lord, wast born for my sake, didst suffer hunger and thirst for my sake,—didst teach, pray, and fast for my sake,—all thy holy actions and works thou wroughtest for my sake,—thou sufferedst most grievous pains and torments for my sake,—and, finally, thou gavest thy most precious body and blood to be shed on the cross, for my sake: Now, most merciful Saviour, let all these things profit me; let thy blood cleanse and wash away the spots and foulness of my sins, let thy righteousness hide and cover my unrighteousness."

William Tyndal, born in, or near Wales, and educated at Oxford, went to Flanders, and translated the New Testament into English, by which means many became Protestants. He exhorted Frith thus:—"Expound the law truly, . . . and prove all men sinners; . . . then, as a faithful minister, set forth the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, and let the wounded consciences drink of the water of him. Then (saith he) shall your preaching be with power, . . . and the Spirit of God shall work with you, and all consciences shall bear record unto you, and feel that it is so." He was imprisoned near Antwerp, and unjustly condemned, strangled, and burnt.

John Frith, a learned clergyman and martyr

in Henry VIII.'s time, was born in Kent, and at Cambridge met with Tyndal, of whom he learned many things respecting saving knowledge. When he came to Smithfield, he, with an undaunted courage, went to the stake, and continued to the last constant and patient.

Thomas Bilney, a pious clergyman, having become a reformer, converted many to the knowledge of the gospel, especially Hugh Latimer, then a Roman Catholic zealot, afterwards a martyr.—Through human frailty, he subscribed in favour of Roman Catholic errors, but could enjoy no peace of conscience till he had repented of this. Bilney, in a letter to Dr. Tonstal, gives this account of his conversion:—"The woman which was twelve years vexed with the bloody flux, had consumed all that she had upon physicians, and yet was still worse and worse, until such time as she came to Christ; and after she had once touched the hem of his vesture, through faith she was healed. O mighty power of the Most High! which I also, most miserable sinner, have often tasted and felt. Before I came to Christ, I had, likewise, spent all I had upon ignorant physicians. They appointed me fastings, watchings, buying of pardons, and masses, &c. But at last I heard speak of Jesus, even then when the New Testament was first set out by Erasmus. At first I was allured to read, rather for the Latin (having heard it was eloquently done) than for the word of God. At the first reading, I hit upon this sentence of St. Paul, (O most sweet and comfortable sentence to my soul!) in 1 Tim. i. "It is a true saying, and worthy of all acceptation,

Digitized by Google

that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief." This sentence, through God's instruction and inward working, did so exhilarate my heart, being before wounded with the guilt of my sins, insomuch, that my bruised bones leapt for joy. After this, the Scripture began to be more pleasant to me than the honey or the honey-comb. Therein I learned, that all my travails, all my fasting and watching, all the redemption of masses and pardons, without faith in Christ, were but a hasty and swift running out of the right way; or else much like the vesture made of fig-leaves, wherewithal Adam and Eve went about in vain to cover their nakedness, and could never obtain quietness and rest till they believed in the promise of God, that Christ, the seed of the woman, should break the serpent's head. Neither could I be relieved or eased of the sharp stingings of my sins, before I was taught of God, that even "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so shall the Son of man be lifted up, that all which believe on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." As soon as I began to taste and savour this heavenly lesson, which none can teach but God only, I desired the Lord to increase my faith.—And at last I desired nothing more, than that I being so comforted by him, I might be strengthened by his Holy Spirit and grace from above, to teach the wicked his ways, which are mercy and truth, that the wicked may be converted unto him by me, who once was also wicked. Accordingly I did teach, and set forth Christ, being made for us by God his Father, our wisdom, righteousness,

Digitized by Google

sanctification, and redemption." When about to suffer martyrdom, he said, "I have had many storms in this world, but now my vessel will soon be on shore in heaven." In his imprisonment he tried his fortitude, by burning his finger in the candle, and was much supported by that promise, "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt;" saying, it would only consume the stubble of his body, and purify his soul. At his death, he said, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant;" and, lifting up his hands, cried; "Lord, I believe."

Richard Byfield, a monk, had, from reading Tyndal's translation of the New Testament, become a Protestant. He was tortured, and afterwards burnt at Smithfield. Counsellor Bainham was also apprehended on suspicion of heresy, and by torture compelled to forsake the truth. Finding, however, no peace in his conscience, he openly confessed the truth, and was burnt in Smithfield. Fox mentions a remarkable circumstance at his death: after the lower part of his body was consumed by the flames, he cried out to the Roman Catholics, "Ye look for miracles; —behold one here! for in this fire I feel no more pain, than if I were on a bed of down. It is to me a bed of roses."

With the martyr Lambert, king Henry VIII. thought proper to dispute, and he afterwards passed sentence of condemnation against him. After his legs were consumed, he, lifting up such hands as he had, and his fingers flaming with fire, cried to the people, "None but Christ, none but Christ."

Digitized by Google

Dr. Barnes, when brought to the stake, said, "I believe in the holy and blessed Trinity, three Persons and one God, that created and made all the world; and that this blessed Trinity sent down the second Person Jesus Christ. And I do believe that he lived here among us, and after he had preached and taught his Father's will, he suffered the most bitter and cruel death for me and all mankind. And I do believe, that this his death and passion was the sufficient price and ransom for the sin of all the world. And I do believe, that through his death he overcame the devil, sin, death, and hell, and that there is none other satisfaction unto the Father, but this his death and passion only; and that no work of man did deserve any thing of God, but only his passion, as touching our justification; for I acknowledge the best work that I ever did is impure and imperfect. (Here he cast abroad his arms, and desired God to forgive him his trespasses.) Wherefore, I trust in no good work that ever I did, but only in the death of Christ, and I do not doubt but through him to inherit the kingdom of heaven." Garnet, a clergyman, who had travelled for fifteen years, and privately taught the gospel, from place to place, suffered with Dr. Barnes. So did a preacher named Jerome.

A lady named Askew, in the confession of her faith, wrote, "Though God hath given me the bread of adversity, and the waters of trouble, yet not so much as my sins have deserved." When Nicholas Shanton counselled her to recant, as he had done, she said, "It had been good for him never to have been born." To Mr. Lacelles

shew note. "O friend, most dearly beloved in God, I marvel not a little what should move you to judge in me so slender a faith as to fear death, which is the end of all misery. I desire you not to believe of me such weakness, for I doubt not but God will perform his work in me, like as he hath begun." When Wrisley, lord chancellor, sent in her letters at the stake, offering her the king's pardon if she would recant; she, refusing to look upon them, said, "That she came not thither to deny her Lord and Master."—Heroic firmness! not even accepting deliverance, that she might obtain a better resurrection!

At Buckingham, Thomas Bainard and James Morston were burnt; the one for reading the Lord's Prayer, the other St. James' Epistle, in English. Saitess, a priest, was hanged; and John Porter, a young man, was chained to a post till he died, for reading the English New Testament.

## SECT. 2.—*Edward VI.'s Reformation of the church, and personal piety.*

Upon Henry VIII.'s death, the true Reformation began, under his son king Edward VI. Edward came to the throne when he was only in the tenth year of his age, and reigned between six and seven years. King Edward was exceedingly attentive to the instruction given him by his tutors. He willingly left his play and recreation for books, and got so forward in his studies, that archbishop Cranmer wept for joy when he saw the progress the king was making. He understood English,



Digitized by Google

Latin, and French; and, in some measure, Greek, Italian, and Spanish. To the reformation of the church, he was exceedingly attentive. The Holy Scriptures were printed in English; the book of Common Prayer was drawn up; the first book of Homilies was published; and Christians who had been banished for the profession of pure religion, were received with honour.

At the time that this excellent young king was declining in health, bishop Ridley preached before him, and spoke a great deal on the subject of charity. The king was so much affected with the sermon, that he sent for the bishop, thanked him for his discourse, and requested his advice respecting some acts of charity. The bishop, astonished at the tenderness and pious zeal of the young prince, burst into tears, and begged he might have time to consult the lord mayor and aldermen on the subject. The king accordingly wrote to them, saying, that he was anxious to do something speedily for the relief of the poor. Upon receiving their answer, he founded, 1. Christ's Hospital, for educating fatherless children.—2. Bridewell, for employing the wilfully idle.—3. The Hospital of St. Thomas, for the sick and wounded. Another proof of king Edward's sincere piety we have also in his love of the Holy Scriptures. When he one day wanted to take down something above his reach, a person brought him a large Bible to stand upon; but the king refused it, considering it unfit to trample that book under his feet, which he thought it his duty to treasure up in his heart. But the people of England were not sensible of the great mercies God had bestowed upon them;

Digitized by Google

they did not improve their valuable privileges; nor heartily embrace that pure gospel which had been so clearly made known; and, therefore, the Almighty soon removed this pious prince from an earthly to a heavenly throne, and permitted the midnight of Mary's reign, suddenly to succeed the noonday of Edward's. The young king was seized with a complaint of the lungs, which, in a few months, ended in his death. He showed, during his sickness, great resignation to the will of God. About three hours before his death, his eyes being closed, he offered up this prayer, "Lord God, deliver me out of this miserable and wretched life, and take me among thy chosen. Howbeit, not my will but thy will be done. Lord, I commit my spirit to thee. O Lord, thou knowest how happy it were for me to be with thee, yet for thy chosen's sake, send me life and health, that I may truly serve thee. O my Lord God, bless thy people and save thine inheritance. O Lord God, save thy chosen people of England. O my Lord God, defend this realm from papistry, and maintain thy true religion, that I and my people may praise thy holy name, for thy Son Jesus Christ's sake." Soon after, in the pangs of death, he said, "Lord have mercy on me, and receive my spirit."

Reader! How uncertain is life! King Edward had not reached his 16th year; what an illustration of that passage of Scripture, "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass, the grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away." How important then is it, to prepare to meet your God! You may at this time,



Digitized by Google

perhaps, enjoy the strength, activity, and spirits of youth, but remember that you may, notwithstanding, be carried, in early life, from your chamber to the grave. Thousands of young persons die every year of the very same complaint as this worthy prince,—a consumption; and, perhaps, within a few months you may be in your coffin. King Edward, as you have seen, took delight in prayer; and no doubt found more pleasure when alone in his closet, than when surrounded by noblemen at court. By praying to God, his heavenly Father, he gained strength to overcome the great temptations to which he was liable as a prince. The grace of the Holy Spirit kept him from the dominion of pride, and enabled him to "crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts." Reader, pray daily to God for the same grace, that you may not fall into sin, but be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." If you depend upon your own strength, and your own resolutions, without seeking the grace of God and "a supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ," you will still live in sin, and never possess that "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." King Edward loved the word of God. Reader! make it your business also to "search the Scriptures daily." The sooner you begin, if you are now young, the more will you know of them, and if you seek the Almighty's blessing while you read, the Scriptures will be not only laid up in your memory, but, by the grace of his Holy Spirit, written upon your heart. It is very likely, that if you should thus try to serve the Lord in your youth, and begin to think of death

Digitized by Google

and eternity; to pray with holy earnestness; and to read the Bible constantly,—it is likely that you will be reproached for your piety. But then you should consider, that if you are disliked by wicked companions, you will be loved and respected by "the people of God." Angels, too, will look down upon you with delight. You are compassed with a great cloud of these witnesses; therefore, "lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset you, and run with patience the race that is set before you." "The Author and Finisher of your faith endured the cross and despised the shame,"—for he looked to the joy set before him. He has left you "an example that you should follow his steps." To live thus to the honour of Christ, is indeed your reasonable service. He has given you life and breath and all things; and he has redeemed you by his precious blood. Therefore, as a king claims the gold mines in his dominions as mines royal, whilst other mines are left to their owners; so the Lord Jesus, whilst he permits you to honour and to love your countrymen, your friends, and your relatives, claims for himself all the best affections of your soul.

## Sect. 3.—*The life and death of Lady Jane Grey.*

King Edward was persuaded by the duke of Northumberland, and other ambitious men, to set aside his eldest sister Mary, who was a Roman Catholic, and make lady Jane Grey his successor to the crown, in order that the Reformation might be supported.



Digitized by Google

Lady Jane Grey, daughter of the duke of Suffolk, was granddaughter to King Henry VIII.'s sister. She was married to Lord Guildford Dudley. Soon after, the king died, and lady Jane was desired to take the crown; she endeavoured to decline it with many tears, but through much persuasion she was proclaimed. She had not been queen above ten days, before Mary was proclaimed queen, and caused lady Jane to be committed to the tower, and condemned for treason, with her husband.

Queen Mary sent a priest, Mr. Feckenham, to her, two days before her death, to commune with her. "I am here come" (said he) "from the queen and council to instruct you in the true doctrine of the right faith, &c." "I heartily thank the queen," (said she.) "What is then" (said he) "required of a Christian?" "To believe" (said lady Jane) "in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God."—"What," (said he,) "is there nothing else required or looked for in a Christian, but to believe in him?" "Yes," (said she,) "we must love him with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind, and our neighbour as our self." "Why, then," (said he,) "faith justifies not, and saveth not." "Yes, verily," (said lady Jane,) "faith only (as Paul saith) justifies." "Why," (said he,) "St. Paul saith, If I have all faith without love, it is nothing." "True," (said she,) "for how can I love him, whom I trust not? or how can I trust him, whom I love not? Faith and love go both together, and yet love is comprehended in faith." "How must we love our neighbour?" (said he.) "To love

Digitized by Google

our neighbour" (said she) "is to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, and give drink to the thirsty, and to do to him as we would to ourselves." "Why then" (said he) "it is necessary unto salvation to do good works also, and it is not sufficient only to believe?" "It is meet" (said she) "that a Christian, in token that he follows his Master Christ, do good works, yet may we not say that they profit to our salvation; for when we have done all, we be unprofitable servants, and faith only in Christ's blood saveth us."

She wrote to her father,—"Although my death, at hand, to you seem right woful, to me there is nothing that can be more welcome than, from this vale of misery, to aspire to that heavenly throne of all joy and pleasure, with Christ our Saviour; in whose steadfast faith (if it be lawful for the daughter so to write to the father) the Lord that hitherto hath strengthened you, so continue you, that at last we may meet in heaven, with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." The night before she suffered, she sent to her sister Catharine, the New Testament in Greek, at the end whereof she wrote—"I have sent you (good sister) a book, which although it be not outwardly trimmed with gold, yet inwardly it is more worth than precious stones. It is the book of the law of the Lord. It is his Testament and last will which he bequeathed unto us wretches, which shall lead you to the path of eternal joy; and if you, with a good mind, read it, it shall bring you to an immortal and everlasting life. It shall teach you to live, and learn you to die. It shall win you more than you should have gained by the

Digitized by Google

possession of your woful father's lands: for so if God had prospered him, you should have inherited his lands, so if you ply diligently this book, seeking to direct your life after it, you shall be an inheritor of such riches, as neither the covetous shall withdraw from you, nor the thief steal, nor the moth corrupt. . . . . Trust not that the tenderness of your age shall lengthen your life; the young die (if God call) as soon as the old. Labour always to learn to die, defy the world, deny the devil, and despise the flesh, and delight yourself only in the Lord. Be penitent for your sins, but yet despair not; be strong in faith, and yet presume not. Desire with St. Paul to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, with whom, even in death, there is life. . . . . Rejoice in Christ, as I do. Follow the steps of your master Christ, and take up your cross. . . . And, as concerning my death, rejoice as I do, that I shall be delivered of this corruption, and put on incorruption; for I am assured, that I shall, for losing of a mortal life, win an immortal life, the which I pray God grant you, and send you of his grace to live in his fear, and to die in the true Christian faith, from the which (in God's name) I exhort you that you never swerve, neither for hope of life, nor fear of death." The morning on which she suffered, she declined seeing her husband, the lord Guildford Dudley, who suffered just before her; observing, "it might discompose them, and would be unnecessary, as they would shortly meet in a better world." On the scaffold, she said, "Good people, I am come hither to die, and by a law I am condemned to the same. The fact against the queen's

Digitized by Google

highness was unlawful, and the consenting thereunto by me; but touching the procurement and desire thereof, I do wash my hands thereof in innocency before God and you, (and therewith she wrung her hands.) I pray you bear me witness, that I die a true Christian, and that I look to be saved by no other mean, but only by the mercy of God in the blood of his only Son Jesus Christ." Then kneeling down, she repeated Psalm li.—Looking upon the block, and kneeling, she said, "Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit." She ended this life in 1554, aged 18.

Lady Jane was the most extraordinary young person of that age for her great knowledge of languages, as well as her piety. What a lesson to the young is her life, not even to obey their parents in any thing sinful; though to honour father and mother is the first commandment with promise. In other points, in faith and in purity, strive, reader, by God's grace, to imitate this young Christian.

## Sect. 4.—*The persecution of the church of England by Queen Mary.*

Queen Mary, amongst other efforts to restore the Roman Catholic superstitions, persecuted those who favoured the Reformation under her brother Edward VI.; in doing which, she was chiefly assisted by Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, and Bonner, bishop of London. Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, was one of the sufferers. He had been himself so meek and merciful, that it grew a proverb, "Do my lord of Canterbury a

Digitized by Google

shrewd turn, and he will be your friend as long as you live." Two persons whom he trusted did him a great injury, but when they begged his pardon, he easily forgave, saying, "God make you good men; I never deserved this at your hands, but ask God forgiveness, whom you have so highly offended." It is to the care of Cranmer and other Protestant bishops we owe, under God's providence, the Book of Common Prayer, the Articles, and the Homilies of the church of England. In Mary's reign, he was imprisoned in the tower,—was sent to Oxford, and there he subscribed to a denial of the Protestant faith, notwithstanding which, his enemies would have him burnt.—Being greatly afflicted in his conscience for what he had done, he burst out into a flood of tears, and lifted up his hands towards heaven, and prayed to the Holy Trinity, begging forgiveness of this great sin, and then, addressing himself to the people, desired them, "for Jesus Christ's sake, to pray for him; that God would pardon his sins, and especially that of his recantation, which lay most heavy on his conscience; for that he had done it contrary to the truth that he conceived in his heart, and against the light of his own understanding, Satan having induced him thereto, by laying before him the terribleness of death: but (said he) "this right hand that signed, shall first perish in the flames." When he was tied to the stake, and the fire was kindled, before it came to his body, he stretched forth his right hand, and held it in the flames; and after having commended his spirit into the hands of the Lord Jesus, he died. He had thought it his duty to remain,

Digitized by Google

expecting to suffer in England, and not to escape to another kingdom, but he advised a lady, Mrs. Wilkinson, to flee; and in his letter to her, said, "The true Comforter, in all distresses, is only God through his Son Jesus Christ. Whosoever hath him, hath comfort enough, although he were in a wilderness all alone. He that hath twenty thousand in his company, if God be absent, is in a miserable wilderness. In him is all comfort, and without him is none. Wherefore I beseech you to seek your dwelling there, where you may truly and rightly serve God, and dwell in him, and have him ever dwelling in you."

The learned NICHOLAS RIDLEY, bishop of London, suffered also for his love to the Reformation. He once had a dispute with bishop Hooper respecting ceremonies; but that he possessed much of that charity which St. Paul commends, will appear from the following letter to bishop Hooper, —"My dearly beloved brother, forasmuch as I understand by your works, that we thoroughly agree and wholly consent together in those things which are the grounds and substantial points of our religion, against which the world so furiously rageth in our days, howsoever in time past, by certain by-matters and circumstances of religion, your wisdom and my simplicity (I grant) hath a little jarred, each of us following . . . . his own sense and judgment.—Now, I say, be you assured, that even with my whole heart, God is my witness, in the bowels of Christ, I love you in the truth, and for the truth's sake, which abideth in us; and, as I am persuaded, shall, by the grace of God, abide in us for evermore. Because the

Digitized by Google

world, as I perceive, brother, busily conspireth against Christ our Saviour, with all possible force and power, let us join hands together in Christ; and if we cannot overthrow, yet to our power, and as much as in us lies, let us shake those high altitudes, not with carnal but with spiritual weapons. Let us also prepare ourselves for death, by which, after our short afflictions here, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall triumph together with him in eternal glory." His Christian love and piety induced him also to write thus, in his letter to the prisoners and exiles,—"Why should we Christians fear death? Can death deprive us of Christ, who is all our comfort, our joy, and our life? Nay, forsooth: but, on the contrary, death shall deliver us from this mortal body, which loadeth and beareth down the spirit, that it cannot so well perceive heavenly things; in the which so long as we dwell, we are absent from the Lord. —And who that hath a right knowledge of Christ our Saviour, that he is the eternal Son of God, life, light, the wisdom of the Father, all goodness, all righteousness, and whatsoever heart can desire; yea, infinite plenty of all these, above that that man's heart can conceive or imagine, (for in him dwelleth "the fulness of the Godhead bodily,") and also that he is given us of the Father, and made of God to be "our wisdom, our righteousness, our holiness, and our redemption;" who, I say, that believeth this, indeed, would not gladly be with his master Christ?—To die in defence of Christ's gospel is our bounden duty to Christ, and also to our neighbour; to Christ,—for he died for us, and rose that he might be Lord of all; and

Digitized by Google

seeing he died for us, we also, saith St. John, 1 John iii. 'should jeopard, yea, give our life for the brethren.' —— Farewell, dear brethren, farewell, and let us comfort our hearts in all troubles and in death, with the word of God; for heaven and earth shall perish, but 'the word of the Lord endureth for ever.'". He was so cheerful in the prospect of death, that when a relative offered to sit up with him the night before he suffered, he said, "No, no, you shall not; I intend (God willing) to go to bed, and sleep as quietly to night as ever I did in my life." Our blessed Saviour, even in the agonies of death, did not forget his mother, but commended her to his beloved disciple; bishop Ridley, also, when about to die, begged of Lord Williams to fulfil some charitable requests in behalf of divers poor men, and his sister. Seeing Latimer, his fellow martyr, at the stake, he said to him,—"God will either assuage the heat of the fire, or give us strength to endure its fury with patience;" and so going to the stake he kissed it, then kneeled down and prayed. When the faggots were about him, he said, "O heavenly Father, I give thee thanks, for that thou hast called me to be a professor of thee, even unto death."—When he saw the fire flaming towards him, he said, "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit. Lord, receive my soul. Lord, have mercy upon me."

Hugh Latimer, once bishop of Worcester, had been a most constant and zealous preacher of the Reformation in different parts of England, and died a martyr at 80 years of age. When committed to prison in Oxford, he often continued so,



Digitized by Google

long kneeling, that he was not able to rise without help; and, among other things, these were three principal matters he prayed for; 1. That as God had appointed him to be a preacher of his word, so he would give him grace to stand to his doctrine to death;—2. That God of his mercy would restore his gospel to England once again;—3. That God would preserve the lady Elizabeth, and make her a comfort to this comfortless realm of England.—All of which blessings God mercifully granted.

The following words occur in his letter to bishop Ridley, before they were to dispute with the Roman Catholics;—"Better a few things well pondered, than to trouble the memory with too much. You shall prevail more with praying, than with studying, though mixture be best; for so one shall alleviate the tediousness of the other. I thank you, that you have vouchsafed to minister so plentiful armour unto me, being otherwise altogether unarmed, saving that he cannot be left destitute of help, who rightly trusteth in the help of God. I only learn to die in reading of the New Testament, and am still praying to my God to help me in time of need. God is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above our strength, &c. They can but kill the body, which is of itself mortal. The flesh is weak, but the willingness of the spirit shall refresh the weakness of the flesh. The number of the cryers under the altar must needs be fulfilled. That is the greatest promotion that God giveth in this world, to be such Philippians to whom it is given, not only to believe, but to suffer, &c. But who is able to do these things?

Digitized by Google

Surely all our ability, all our sufficiency is of God. He requireth and promiseth. Let us declare our obedience to his will, when it shall be requisite, in the time of trouble, yea, in the midst of the fire. Pray for me, pray for me, I say; pray for me, I say; for I am sometime fearful: sometime again God doth visit me with his comfort. So he cometh and goeth, to teach me to feel and know mine infirmity, to the intent to give thanks to him that is worthy, lest I should rob him of his due, as many do, yea almost all the world. Farewell. 'Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life,' saith the Lord." He was burnt at the same stake with bishop Ridley, at Oxford. When a faggot was brought kindled with fire, and laid at Ridley's feet, Latimer said, "Be of good comfort, Ridley, we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust will never be put out." He received the flame, as it were embracing it, and said, "O Father of heaven, receive my soul."

JOHN HOOPER, before he was bishop of Gloucester, went to Switzerland, where he learned Hebrew, and resided till the death of king Henry; but in king Edward's reign, he, with many others, returned and assisted in the Reformation. His labours as a preacher were exceedingly great. In queen Mary's days he refused to escape, saying, "I am not ashamed of my testimony, nor will I abandon Christ's cause. Once, I must confess, I did fly, but being called to this place and vocation, I am resolved to stay and live and die with my sheep." He wrote as follows, in a letter to his friends,—"Now is the time of trial, to see



Digitized by Google

whether we fear more, God or man. It was an easy thing to hold with Christ, whilst the prince and world held with him; but now the world hateth him, it is the true trial who be his. Wherefore, in the name, and in the virtue, strength, and power of his Holy Spirit, prepare yourselves in any case to adversity and constancy. . . . Beware of beholding too much the felicity, or misery of this world; for the consideration and too earnest love or fear of either of them, draweth from God. Wherefore, think with yourselves, as touching the felicity of the world, it is good; but yet none otherwise than it standeth with the favour of God. It is to be kept; but yet so far forth, as by keeping of it we lose not God. It is good abiding and tarrying still among our friends here; but yet so, that we tarry not therewithal in God's displeasure, and hereafter dwell with the devils in fire everlasting. There is nothing under God but may be kept, so that God, being above all things we have, be not lost. Of adversity, judge the same. Imprisonment is painful, but yet liberty upon evil conditions, is more painful. The prisons are disagreeable, but yet not so much as . . . . houses, where the fear and true honour of God is lacking. I must be alone and solitary; it is better to be so, and have God with me, than to be in company with the wicked." He was taken from Newgate prison, in London, to Gloucester, in order to suffer. When Sir Anthony Kingstone came and advised him to submit to the Roman church, adding, "Life is sweet,—and death bitter," the bishop replied, "but the death to come is more bitter, and the life to come is far sweeter, and

Digitized by Google

I will rather die than renounce my Lord and Master."

Bishop Hooper, seeing Thomas Drowry, a pious blind boy, as he was going to the stake, said, "Ah, poor boy, God hath taken from thee thy outward sight, but he hath given thee another sight much more precious: he hath endued thy soul with the eye of knowledge and faith." Shortly after bishop Hooper's martyrdom, this boy was burnt. Hooper was met by thousands of people, many weeping to see him in such misery; but he told them, "That he was unworthy who refused to suffer reproach or death for the sake of the Lord Jesus, who refused not for our sakes to suffer a shameful and ignominious death upon the cross;" and began to exhort them to be steadfast in their faith. Kneeling down, he continued in fervent prayer for half an hour with a joyful countenance. Before the fire was kindled, a pardon was offered if he would recant, but he replied with Christian zeal, "If you love my soul, away with it." He continued three quarters of an hour in the fire, praying, and crying out, "O Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy upon my soul." The wood, being green, consumed all his lower parts, when his upper remained untouched, yet he endured patiently till he breathed his last.

Robert Farrar, bishop of St. David's, in Wales, having been remarkably zealous in promoting the reformed doctrines, was burnt in Carmarthen, in the market-place. Concerning his constancy, it is said, that one Richard Jones, a knight's son, coming to Dr. Farrar a little before his death, seemed to lament the painfulness of



Digitized by Google

the death he had to suffer; to whom the bishop answered, "That if he saw him once stir in the pains of his burning, he might then give no credit to his doctrine." Nor did he stir, till a man struck him down with a staff.

JOHN ROGERS, prebendary of St. Paul's, who had assisted Tyndal, at Antwerp, in his translation of the New Testament, was condemned to be burnt for preaching Christ's truth. When going to suffer, his wife, with nine small children and one at her breast, waited to see him, of whom he took his leave, bidding them "trust in the Lord, and he would plentifully provide for them;" after which he went and embraced the flames.—He was the first that sealed his testimony with his blood, during the reign of queen Mary. He was a man of singular eloquence and wisdom, charitable, and very devout in prayer.

LAURENCE SAUNDERS was put apprentice to a merchant, but he liked his book, or prayers, better than business; so he went to Cambridge to study for the church, and became a very useful clergyman. At the beginning of queen Mary's reign, Dr. Pendleton and Mr. Saunders met, and debated what was best for them, who had been such zealous preachers in king Edward's days, to do in so dangerous a season? Mr. Saunders seemed anxious to flee, rather than to stick to his profession. Dr. Pendleton admonished him not to forsake his flock, nor start now aside. Saunders answered but little, and only wished that Almighty God would give him more strength than he felt for the present. When they came to London, feeble, faint-hearted Saunders, by the goodness

Digitized by Google

of Almighty God, grew courageous, preaching Christ his master, but Pendleton turned apostate. "Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." Saunders wrote as follows, in his letter to Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, prisoners in Oxford:—"O most happy estate! that 'our life is hid with Christ in God: but when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall also appear with him in glory.' In the mean time we walk by faith, which faith, although for want of outward appearance reason reputeth but in vain, yet the chosen of God do know the effect thereof, to bring a more substantial taste, and lively fruition of very felicity and perfect blessedness, than reason can reach, or sense perceive." In a letter to his wife, after he was condemned to be burnt, he says, "The grace of Christ, with the consolation of the Holy Ghost, to the keeping of the faith and a good conscience, confirm and keep you for ever. To number God's mercies in particular, were to number the drops of water which are in the sea, the sands on the shore, the stars in the sky. O my dear wife, and ye the rest of my friends, rejoice with me, rejoice with thanksgiving for this my present promotion, in that I am made worthy to magnify my God, not only in my life, by my slow mouth, and uncircumcised lips, bearing witness to his truth, but also by my blood to seal the same." When brought upon his examination, and offered his release if he would recant, he replied, "That he did confess life and liberty to be things desirable, but that he would not murder his conscience to save his life; but, by God's grace, (said he,) I will abide the worst.

Digitized by Google

extremity that man can do against me, rather than do any thing against my conscience." When he was brought to the stake, he embraced it, and said, "Welcome, cross of Christ, welcome, everlasting life." He was burnt at Coventry.

John Philpot, archdeacon of Winchester, was a learned and zealous reformer. When confined with another clergyman, in bishop Bonner's coal-house, they, like St. Paul and Silas, sang praises to God. Within a day or two Philpot was sent for by Bonner, who asked how he could be so merry as to sing psalms in such a place: Philpot replied, "according to the directions of St. Paul, we 'rejoice in the Lord,' singing together in 'hymns and spiritual songs.'" Being sent for again, the bishop of Worcester desired him to pray to God to give him grace, that he might conceive the truth: whereupon Philpot, falling on his knees, prayed earnestly, desiring God to strengthen him to defend his cause, and to better his understanding, if he was deceived: but Bonner was displeased with the bishop for bidding him pray;—"For" (said he) "this it is in which they take a singular pride, and are like some heretics that Pliny makes mention of, who used to sing praises before the dawn of the day." "Yes," (said Philpot,) "I beseech God of his mercy to make all that are here present, such heretics; for they were godly Christians, with whom the tyrants of the world were offended, for their Christian practices and godly living."*

He wrote thus to certain Christian brethren.—"It is an easy thing to begin to do well, but to

* See page 63 of this book.

Digitized by Google

continue in well doing is the only property of the children of God, and such as assuredly shall be saved. Now it will appear what we love best; for to that we love we will stick.—What loseth he, which in this life receiveth an hundred for one, with assurance of eternal life? O happy exchange! Even now he is of the city and household of the saints with God; he possesseth the peace of God which passeth understanding, and is made a fellow of the innumerable company of heaven, and a perpetual friend of all those that have died in the Lord, from the beginning of the world. Is not this more than an hundred fold? I beseech you, with St. Paul, to give your bodies pure and holy sacrifices unto God.——God tempteth us now as he did our father Abraham, commanding him to sacrifice his Isaac, which signifieth mirth, joy, &c. He, by obedience, preserved his Isaac alive. God commands us to sacrifice our Isaac, our joy, which, if we be ready to do as Abraham was, our joy shall not perish, but live and be increased; the ram shall be sacrificed in the stead thereof; only the concupiscence of the flesh, entangled with the cares of this stinging world, shall be mortified." In his letter to lady Vane, he wrote, "The spirit confirm, strengthen, and establish you in the true knowledge of the gospel, that your faithful heart may attain and taste with all the saints, what is the height, the depth, the length, and the breadth of the cross of Christ.—The world wondereth how we can be merry in such extreme misery; but our God is omnipotent, which turneth misery into felicity: believe me, there is no such joy in the world, as the people of Christ have under the

Digitized by Google

cross; I speak by experience; therefore believe me, and fear nothing that the world can do unto you; for when they imprison our bodies, they set our souls at liberty with God; when they cast us down, they lift us up; yea, when they kill us, then do they bring us to everlasting life. What greater glory can there be, than to be in conformity with Christ, which afflictions work in us? Death, why should I fear thee? since thou canst not hurt me, but rid me from misery to eternal glory. J. P. Dead to the world, and living to Christ."

In another letter to the same lady, he wrote, "I have so much joy of the reward that is prepared for me, most wretched sinner, that though I be in a place of darkness and mourning, yet I cannot lament, but both night and day am so joyful, as though I were under no cross at all. Pray that this joy be never taken from me, for it passeth all the delights of this world, it surmounteth all understanding." When confined in Newgate, he had word brought him one morning that he must suffer; with a cheerful countenance, he replied, "I am ready, God grant me strength, and a joyful resurrection;" and, after having retired to pray, he came forth, and was conveyed into Smithfield. He embraced the stake, saying, "Shall I disdain to suffer at this stake, when my Lord and Saviour refused not to suffer a most vile death for me?"

Dr. Rowland Taylor, a learned and zealous reformer, was a man of great natural courage, and very kind and charitable to the poor. In London, the night after he was degraded, his wife and son were permitted to sup with him; and,

Digitized by Google

after supper, he gave God thanks for his grace, that had so called him, and given him strength to abide by his holy word. To his son he said, "My dear son, God Almighty bless, and give thee his holy Spirit, to be a true servant of Christ, to learn his word, and constantly to stand by his truth all thy life long.—Flee from all sin: in all things lawful be obedient to thy mother. Beware of lewd company, of young men that fear not God. When God shall bless thee, count that thy chiefest riches, is to be rich in alms." Having then prayed for his family, he gave his wife a prayer book, and his son a book containing the sentiments of ancient Christians respecting martyrdom. His last will and testament contained these words,—"I say to my wife, and to my children, the Lord gave you unto me, and the Lord hath taken me from you, and you from me: blessed be the name of the Lord.—I have ever found God more faithful and favourable, than is any father or husband; trust ye therefore in him.—Count me not dead; for I shall certainly live, and never die.—I have bequeathed you to the only Omnipotent. Departing hence in sure hope, without . . . doubting of eternal salvation, I thank God, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, my certain Saviour. Amen. R. T." Doubtless it pleased God to grant peculiarly strong hope, and assurance of his favour, and their own eternal happiness, to those whom his providence called to suffer as martyrs. In some cases probably, persons who are by nature timid, from that cause have more fear respecting their eternal state than others, who, (like Dr. Taylor,) are naturally bold. In general it may be expected,

Digitized by Google

that the more believers "look unto Jesus the author and finisher of their faith," depend upon the Holy Spirit's influences, watch against sin, and "set their affections upon things above," the more will their "hope, joy, and peace, in believing," increase. Before he left London, his wife, with one of her children, and an orphan girl whom Dr. Taylor had brought up, waited all night at Botolph's church, to see him taken away early in the morning. When they met, he prayed with his wife, his daughter, and the orphan, and comforted them. His servant, John Hull, brought Dr. Taylor's son to see his father. He prayed for his son, and said to Hull, "Thou hast been the faithfullest servant I ever had." When he came within two miles of Hadley, he asked the sheriff, "Shall we not go through Hadley?" "Yes," (said the sheriff.) Then said he, "O good Lord, I thank thee, I shall yet once, ere I die, see my flock, whom, thou, Lord, knowest, I have heartily loved, and truly taught; good Lord, bless them, and keep them steadfast in thy word and truth." As he was led through Hadley, a poor man and his five children fell down upon their knees, and the poor man said, "O dear father and good shepherd, Dr. Taylor, God help thee and succour thee, as thou hast many a time succoured me and my poor children." Dr. Taylor said to the people, "I have preached to you God's word and truth, and am come this day to seal it with my blood." He was burnt in a barrel of pitch, on Oldham common.

JOHN BRADFORD, prebendary of St. Paul's, London, was, for piety and usefulness as a preacher,

Digitized by Google

one of the greatest of the English reformers. When in prison, he preached to the prisoners, and relieved their wants. Many persons came to him also for instruction, so that his chamber seemed rather a chapel than a prison. The keeper of the prison sometimes permitted him to go into London and visit his friends, and he was ever so faithful, that he rather returned before than after the time he had set.—Even when at his meals, this holy man was so much in deep meditation, that he often shed tears. When the keeper's wife came and told him, "She had heavy news to tell him,—that he must presently go to Newgate, where chains were ready, in order to be burnt in Smithfield;" he took off his cap, lifted up his eyes towards heaven, and said, "I thank God for it; I have looked for the day a long time; it comes not now to me suddenly, but as a thing that I have waited for with patience; the Lord make me worthy to suffer for his name." He then prayed fervently, called together the prisoners and servants, gave them many pious exhortations, and distributed money amongst them, bidding them persevere in the truth. The next morning the sheriff came, and conveyed him, with John Leafe, a youth of about eighteen years of age, to Smithfield. Falling upon his face, he prayed, till the sheriff ordered him to rise. When fastened to the stake, he cried with a loud voice, "Repent, O England, of thy sins, beware of idolatry." Then turning to the young man, who was an apprentice, he said, "Be of good comfort;" and then embracing the reeds, he said, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."



Digitized by Google

GEORGE MARSH, a clergyman, who constantly taught the doctrines of the Reformation, when persuaded to submit to the church of Rome, and to acknowledge the pope to be head, answered, "I do acknowledge and believe one holy Catholic church, without which there is no salvation; and that this church is but one, because it ever hath, doth, and shall confess one only God, and him only worship: and our only Messiah, and him only trust for salvation: which church is ruled and led by one Spirit, one word, and one faith, &c. and is built only upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the head corner stone, and not upon the Romish laws; . . . and that this church is a little . . . flock, dispersed and scattered abroad as sheep without a shepherd, in the midst of wolves; or as a company of orphans and fatherless children, led and ruled by the only laws, counsels, and word of Christ, who is the supreme head thereof, assisting, succouring, and defending her from all assaults, errors, troubles, and persecutions, wherewith she is ever compassed about." After the bishop of Chester had read half the sentence of condemnation, he asked him whether he would not have the queen's mercy in time; he answered, "He desired the same, and loved her majesty as faithfully as any of them, but yet he durst not deny his Saviour Christ, and so lose his mercy everlasting." He was burnt near Chester.

The Rev. JULIUS PALMER, in the time of Edward was averse to the Reformation, but in Mary's reign he became a Protestant, and suffered death; a proof of his sincerity, and of the power of divine

Digitized by Google

grace! At Oxford, he became an elegant scholar. When he saw the triumphant death of Ridley and Latimer, at Oxford, he resolved to read protestant books; and became a convert. Afterwards, determined to leave his fellowship in Oxford, he was asked by a friend, "Whither he would go, and how he would live?" He answered, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. Let the Lord work, I will commit myself to God, and the wide world."—He was taken prisoner at the town of Reading. At Newbury the sheriff offered him an annuity if he would recant: but he refused. At his trial, Palmer said to Dr. Jeffery, who had derided him because he relied on God's grace in searching after and defending divine truth; "Sir, no man can believe but by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost: therefore, if I were not a spiritual man, and inspired with God's Holy Spirit, I were not a true Christian. 'He that hath not the Spirit of Christ, is none of his.'" He was burnt, with two others, at Newbury. After praying together, they sung the thirty-first Psalm. When the fire was kindled, they continued to cry, "Lord Jesus, strengthen us! Lord Jesus, receive our souls!" When their heads had fallen together, and the spectators thought Palmer lifeless, his tongue and lips again moved, and were heard to pronounce the name of Jesus.

John Hullier, a clergyman, was burnt at Cambridge. To the people he said, "that he died for the testimony of the truth, and that there was no rock, except the Lord Jesus Christ, to build upon, nor any hope of salvation but through the Redeemer's sufferings." Several books were also



Digitized by Google

thrown into the fire; amongst others a communion book, which the martyr joyfully took up and read, till the smoke prevented him. He then prayed, and praised God for such a comforter as that book in his last moments.

JOHN LAWRENCE, a clergyman, was brought to Colchester, and being unable to go (for his legs were much worn with irons in prison), he was taken to the fire in a chair, and, sitting, was consumed in the fire. When he was burning, young children came about the fire, and cried out, "Lord, strengthen thy servant, and keep thy promise."

Another clergyman, ROBERT SAMUEL, who had preached with great zeal in Suffolk, after being tortured at Norwich, was burnt; and at the stake used the following, amongst other expressions: "O Lord, my God and Saviour! . . . I and many of thy creatures refuse the . . . conveniences of this life; . . . . for, Lord, thou knowest, if we would but seem to please men in things contrary to thy word, . . . we might enjoy these advantages that others do, as wife, children, goods, and friends; and now that the world will not suffer me to enjoy them, except I offend thy laws, I give unto thee my whole spirit, soul, and body, and I leave all the pleasures of this life, . . for the hope's sake of eternal life, purchased in Christ's blood. . . . . O Father, I do not presume to come unto thee, trusting in mine own righteousness, but only in the merits of thy dear Son my Saviour. . . . . O Lord Jesus, receive my spirit into thy hands."

A minister, WILLIAM TYMS by name, wrote in his letter to Agnes Glascock, "I trust I shall not

Digitized by Google

long tarry, . . . but shortly . . . be carried up after my dear brethren and sisters, which are gone before me into heaven in a fiery chariot: therefore, now I take my leave of you, till we meet in heaven, and hie you after. . . . . You shall find me singing, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth," at my journey's end. Therefore now make good haste, and loiter not by the way, lest night take you, and you be shut out of the gate, with the foolish virgins." In another letter to his friends he said, "Blessed be my good and merciful God, that ever he gave me a body to glorify his name." He was burnt with five others in Smithfield.

Thomas Tomkins was tormented by having his hand held over the flame of a wax candle. He afterwards told James Hinse, that "his spirit was so rapt, that he felt no pain;" yet the veins shrank, and the sinews burst. He was burnt in Smithfield afterwards.

William Hunter, nineteen years of age, one day finding a chapel open, entered, and began to read in the English Bible which lay upon the desk. He was imprisoned, but bishop Bonner offered to make him a free man of the city, and give him forty pounds to set up in business, if he would recant. He answered, "I thank you for your great offers; but, my lord, I cannot find in my heart to turn from God for the love of the world; for I count all worldly things but loss and dung, in respect of the love of Christ." His parents came to him, and desired heartily of God that he might continue to the end in that good way which he had begun, and his mother said, that "she was



Digitized by Google

glad that ever she was so happy to bear such a child, who could find in his heart to lose his life for Christ's name's sake." Going along to martyrdom, he met with his father, who said to his son, "God be with thee! son William." And William said, "God be with you, good father, and be of good comfort; for I hope we shall meet again." At the stake he kneeled down and read the fifty-first Psalm, till he came to these words, "The sacrifice of God is a contrite spirit; a contrite and a broken heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." He refused the queen's pardon if he would become an apostate. The sun suddenly shone out of a dark cloud. The martyr said, "Son of God, shine upon me." He cast his psalter into his brother's hand, who said, "William, think on the holy passion of Christ, and be not afraid of death." "Behold," answered William, "I am not afraid." Then he lifted up his hands to heaven, and said, "Lord, receive my spirit!"

Stephen Knight, (burnt at Malden,) when at the stake, used these words in prayer. "Accept this burnt sacrifice and offering, O Lord, not for the sacrifice, but for thy dear Son's sake, my Saviour, for whose testimony I offer this free-will offering with all my heart and with all my soul. O heavenly Father, forgive me my sins, as I forgive all the world. Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Rawlins White, an aged fisherman of Cardiff, in Wales, had his son taught to read English, and after the little boy could read, his father, every night after supper, made the boy read a portion

Digitized by Google

of the Holy Scriptures. Hence, through the help of his little son, and other means of grace, he profited so, that he was able to admonish and instruct others. He was sentenced to death for his love to the Protestant religion. When about to suffer, his poor wife and children stood weeping, and the sudden sight of them so pierced his heart, that the tears trickled down his face. Being come to the stake, he fell upon the ground, saying, "Earth unto earth, and dust unto dust; thou art my mother, and unto thee I shall return." Whilst burning, his prayer was, "O Lord, receive my spirit!"

Thomas Hawkes was burnt at Coxall. His friends desired he would show some token, if he could, whether a man might patiently endure fire, and it was agreed, that if the pain were tolerable, he should lift up his hands. When he had continued long in the fire, his speech taken away, so that all concluded he was dead, he put up his hands, and with great joy (as it seemed) clapped them three times together. His knowledge of the trials of the Christian life, led him to write thus to some friends: "The Holy Spirit conduct and lead you all in all your doings, that you may always direct your deeds according to his holy word. Here we are as pilgrims and strangers, in danger of that dreadful dragon, and his sinful seed, to be tempted, devoured, and tormented, who ceaseth not behind every bush to lay a bait, &c. casting abroad his apples in all places, times, and seasons, to see if Adam will be allured and enticed to leave the living God, and his most holy commandment, &c. Therefore I am bold in bonds,

Digitized by Google

(as entirely desiring your everlasting felicity,) to ward you."

Nicholas Shetterden was burnt at Canterbury with three other martyrs, two of them clergymen. He wrote in a letter to his brother, "I am told that you have written to persuade me to be ruled by my uncle, who then will bestow his goods largely upon me. But, my good brother, I trust you do not judge so evil of me, that I should have a faith to sell for money; for though he, or you, were able to give me the treasure of the whole country; yet I thank my Lord God, I do judge it but an heap of dung, in respect of the treasure hid within; yet I do esteem a buckle of your shoe, if it come with good will. To be counselled, or ruled by him, or you, or any other my friends, I do not refuse, if they require no more of me than what belongs to mortal men; but if they require of me any thing which pertaineth to God only, there is neither high nor low, friend nor foe, I trust in God, shall get it of me, nor yet the angels in heaven. . . . . Dear brother, my heart's desire and prayer to God is, that we may together enjoy the bliss of the eternal inheritance by one spiritual regeneration and new birth, as we are joined by nature. But, alas! the way and mean thereunto, hath been much neglected of me (I will not say of you, for I had rather you should accuse yourself.) We have not sought for wisdom in God's word, as some in the world, whom we know, have sought for money."

Robert Smith, a very bold confessor of the truth, wrote thus in a letter to his friends: "For nothing under the heavens defile your consciences

Digitized by Google

before God. God will not be mocked. Such as dissemble with God, deceive themselves." In a letter to his wife, he said, "Seek first to love God, dear wife, with your whole heart, and then shall it be easy to love your neighbour. Be friendly to all creatures, especially to your own soul. Be always an enemy to the devil and the world, but especially to your own flesh. Seek quietness with all men, but especially with your own conscience. Love all men, but especially your enemies. Hate the sins that are past, but especially those that are to come." He was burnt at Uxbridge.

Robert, John, and William Glover, were pious Protestant gentlemen of Manchester. Robert Glover was found ill in bed, and conveyed to Lichfield, ill as he was, and afterwards put into prison. Wasted with sickness, his only comfort was a Latin Testament and a prayer book. The third day, he was visited by the chancellor and a prebendary of the cathedral, who endeavoured to persuade him to forsake the truth.——He felt much doubt of his strength to bear the bitter cross preparing for him, for he had no sensible comfort, though he had prayed day and night for the same. Augustus Bernher, a faithful friend and minister, consoled him in the trying conflict on the day of his death; and as he proceeded towards the stake, the Saviour in whom he trusted granted him extraordinary consolation, so that he went in joy and triumph to martyrdom.

William Wolsey and Robert Pigot were burnt at Ely. When at the stake, a person threw into the fire books like New Testaments. Pigot and

Digitized by Google

Wolsey each seized a book and pressed it to his breast, repeating, at the same time, the 136th Psalm.

The Rev. T. Whittle, B. Green, T. Brown, J. Tudson, J. Went, Isabel Tooster, and Joan Lashford were burnt together in Smithfield. Mr. Whittle was the person imprisoned with Mr. Philpot, who first denied, and then maintained, the faith. "The night after I had subscribed,' (said he,) "I was grieved, and for sorrow of conscience could not sleep; for in the deliverance of my body out of bands, I could find no joy nor comfort, but still was, in my conscience, more and more tormented;" but when he had blotted out his name, he was glad, although death would follow. "Now being condemned to die," (said he,) "my conscience, I praise God, is quiet."—A proof that, even in this world, men are often happier if they bear trials for the sake of truth and holiness, than where they, by falsehood, endeavour to get rid of sufferings.

Bartlet Green had studied the sciences at Oxford. He became a convert to the Protestant faith by attending the lectures of Peter Martyr in the University. He was brought up to the law, but became gay and thoughtless; on which account he was afterwards led to deep humiliation before God. He was condemned as a Protestant. In one of his letters he wrote thus:—"Better is the day of death" (said Solomon) "than the day of birth.—Happy are the dead that die in the Lord. Man of woman is born in travail to live in misery; man, through Christ, doth die in joy, to live in felicity: he is born to die, and dieth to live,

Digitized by Google

Strait as he cometh into the world, with cries he uttereth his miserable estate; strait as he departeth with songs, he praiseth God for ever. Scarce yet in his cradle, three deadly enemies assault him; after death no adversary may annoy him; whilst he is here he displeaseth God; when he is dead he fulfilleth his will. Here he dieth every hour, there he liveth continually—here is sin, there is righteousness—here is time, there is eternity—here is hatred, there is love—here is pain, there is pleasure—here is misery, there is felicity—seek, therefore, the things that are above." In the prospect of death he wrote thus to his friends of the Temple: "Very friends are they which are knit together by the knot of charity. Charity doth not decay, but increase in them that die faithfully. If thy friend be out of sight, is thy friendship ended? If he be carried into heaven, is charity hindered thereby? The fathers of the primitive church gave thanks for their friends that died in the faith, to prove that charity died not with death. Neither was that ever but fleshly love, which by distance of place . . . . is parted asunder. If we keep Christ's commandment in loving each other, as he loved us, then should our love be everlasting." Then recommending several poor prisoners, by name, to their care, he adds, "For these and all other poor prisoners, I make this my humble suit and prayer to you all, my especial good friends, beseeching you by all the bonds of amity, in the bowels of mercy, to tender the cases of miserable captives, visit the afflicted, comfort the sorrowful, and relieve the needy.

"This present Monday, when I look to die, and to live for ever.—BARTLET GREEN."

Digitized by Google

When he was at the stake, he repeated in Latin what may be thus translated: "O Christ, my God, I have no sure hope of salvation without thee. Thou being my Guide, I forsake error and follow after truth."

Joan Lashford was an orphan aged about twenty years. Her mother and stepfather, John and Elizabeth Warne, were martyrs already. The daughter was taken up, suspected of heresy for the tenderness which she displayed to her parents in prison, imprisoned, and at last burnt.

Joan Waste, a young woman aged twenty-two, blind from her birth, by great economy enabled herself to purchase a New Testament. Such was her anxiety to hear the contents of this blessed volume, that she would pay a trifle to have a certain number of chapters read, or to have one chapter repeated a certain number of times. She was burnt at Derby.

Elizabeth Folks, a servant, was burnt with several others at Colchester. When Dr. Chadsey pronounced sentence on her, he shed tears, whilst she knelt down, and with hands and eyes lifted towards heaven, gave God thanks that she was selected as one to suffer for the testimony of Christ.

A lady of Manchester, Joyce Lewes by name, was led to doubt the truth of the Roman Catholic religion, after the triumphant death of the martyr Saunders, at Coventry, and she afterwards became a Protestant. When her death-warrant came from London, she sent for some friends, whom she consulted in what manner her death might be most glorious to the name of God, and injurious to the cause of God's enemies; adding, "As for death,

Digitized by Google

I think but lightly of it. When I know that I shall behold the countenance of Christ my Saviour, the fate of death does not much trouble me." About three o'clock in the morning, Satan began to shoot his fiery darts, by putting into her mind to doubt whether she was chosen to eternal life, and whether Christ died for her; but she was enabled to regain comfort, by considering that she had evidence of her election, in the Holy Spirit's working in her heart a love and sincere desire to please God, and to be justified by him through Christ, &c. When she had prayed, she took the cup, (which had been filled with water to refresh her,) and said, "I drink to all them that unfeignedly love the gospel of Christ." She was burnt at Lichfield.

Cicely Ormes, aged twenty-two, was the wife of a weaver at Norwich. At the death of two martyrs she had said, "that she would pledge them of the same cup they drank of;" and she was at last brought before the chancellor, to whom she said, that "however great his desire might be to spare her sinful flesh, it could not equal her inclination to surrender it up in so great a quarrel." When brought to the stake, after declaring her faith to the people, she laid her hand on the stake and said, "Welcome, thou cross of Christ." After the tormentors had kindled the fire, she said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit doth rejoice in God my Saviour." Like some of the primitive Christians, she seems to have been too anxious for a martyr's death; however, she was, perhaps, desirous to make amends to her fellow Protestants for having denied the



Digitized by Google

truth a twelvemonth before. She would not even accept a pardon upon condition of keeping her faith to herself. Doubtless she remembered that text, Rom. x. 10.

Thomas Spurdance, one of queen Mary's servants, said to the chancellor, "No man, I thank God, can justly accuse me of being disobedient to the civil laws. But you must consider, my lord, that I have a soul and body; that soul is none of the queen's, but my body and goods are hers. To God I must give my soul, and all that belongeth to it, that is, I must do the laws and commandments of God; and whoever commands laws contrary to those of God, it is not permitted me to obey them at the loss of my soul, but rather I must obey God than man." He was burnt at Bury.

Thomas Hudson, of Aylesham, disliking the superstition introduced by queen Mary, absented himself from his church and home, and wandered about from place to place; till at length, anxious to see his children, he returned to the bosom of his afflicted family, and hid himself in a hollow place among faggots for six months, waited upon by his wife, while he employed his time in reading and prayer. He was burnt with two other martyrs at Norwich. Hudson slipped from under his chain and came forward. A great opinion prevailed that he was about to recant. The hopes of the enemies of the cross, however, were disappointed; he was only alarmed that his Saviour's face seemed to be hidden from him. Falling upon his knees, his spirit wrestled with God: then the martyr rose in an ecstacy of joy, and

Digitized by Google

exclaimed, "Now, I thank God, I am strong! and care not what man can do to me!" He replaced himself under the chain, and joined his fellow-sufferers.

In a retired place, near a field, in Islington, persons had assembled, to the number of forty; but while they were worshipping, twenty-two were seized and taken to Newgate. Thirteen were burnt, seven in Smithfield, and six at Brentford. Roger Holland, one of them, had been an apprentice, and a lover of bad company. Having once received thirty pounds on his master's account, he lost it at the gaming-table. A servant in the house, who professed the gospel, lived a life that did honour to her profession. To her he revealed the loss his folly had occasioned, and regretted that he had not followed her advice. The maid, with great generosity, knowing that his imprudence might be his ruin, brought him thirty pounds, part of a sum of money left her by legacy. "Here," said she, "is the sum you want; you shall take the money, and I will keep a note; but on this condition, that you abandon all lewd company, that you neither swear nor talk immodestly, and game no more; for, should I learn that you do, I will immediately show this note to your master. Also, you shall promise me to attend the lecture at Allhallows, and the sermon at St. Paul's, every Sunday; you shall cast away all your books of popery, and use the Testament and the prayer book. Pray also fervently to God, to pardon your former offences, and not to remember the sins of your youth, and ever dread to break his laws, or offend his majesty." God did not



Digitized by Google

suffer the endeavours of this excellent domestic to be thrown upon a barren soil; within half a year after, Holland became a zealous professor of the gospel, and was an instrument of conversion to his father and others, whom he visited in Lancashire. His father, pleased with his change of conduct, gave him forty pounds to begin business. He paid the debt to the servant and married her. When brought to the stake, Holland said these words: "Lord, I most humbly thank thy Majesty, that thou hast called me from the state of death unto the light of thy heavenly word, and now unto the fellowship of thy saints, that I may sing and say, Holy, holy, holy, Lord of hosts! And, Lord, into thy hands I commit my spirit! Lord, bless these thy people, and save them from idolatry!"

Perotine Massey, the wife of a minister of Guernsey, with her mother and sister, were burnt for absence from church. A babe, by the force of the flame, burst out of the mother's womb; and yet, by the command of the bailiff, was cast again into the fire and consumed.

Notwithstanding the severity of the persecution, there was a congregation in London, of from 40 to 200 persons, who existed through all Mary's reign, assembled together to celebrate public worship, and corresponded with others in various parts of the kingdom. In Blackfriars, they met at Sir Thomas Carden's house. Between Ratcliffe and Rotherhithe, there lay a ship, on board of which they met for divine service. In a vessel off Billingsgate, they often assembled. Mr. Scamier was their first minister; after him, Mr. Rough,

Digitized by Google

who was burnt; then Mr. Aug. Bernher; at last, Mr. Bentham, afterwards bishop of Lichfield and Coventry. Cuthbert Symson, the deacon, was a very patient martyr at Smithfield.

SECT. 5.—*The restoration of the church of England by Queen Elizabeth.*

The persons mentioned in the last section were some of the pious witnesses for the truth, in England and Wales, in queen Mary's reign. Some also escaped to Strasburg, Frankfort, Basil, Zurich, Geneva, and other places abroad; and among these the duchess of Suffolk, and her husband the Hon. Mr. Bertie. The duchess quitted her house in the night in disguise. After great peril, she landed in Brabant, and, joining her husband, they went partly on foot to Wesel. At Wesel they providentially met with Perusell, (a minister who knew the duchess,) when they, with their infant, were in danger of perishing from cold and hunger, and had taken up their night's abode in the porch of the church. At length, in Poland, they were hospitably entertained by the king, and continued there till the death of queen Mary, in 1558, when her sister Elizabeth, a protestant, came to the crown.

This event was a signal for the return of the English protestants who had fled abroad: amongst whom were persons who became great ornaments to the Christian church. Miles Coverdale, once bishop of Exeter, had diligently assisted in translating the Scriptures, and his version of the reading psalms is still retained in the Book of Common



Digitized by Google

Prayer. Jewel, another exile, was afterwards bishop of Salisbury, and wrote in defence of the church of England. He, by will, gave most of his property to his servants, to scholars, and to the poor; and in his last hours said, "It hath always been my desire that I might glorify God by sacrificing my life for the defence of his truth, but though God hath not granted my desire, I rejoice that my body is worn away in the labours of my holy calling. . . . I have not lived so that I am ashamed to live longer, neither do I fear to die because we have a merciful Lord. . . . Christ is my righteousness. Father, let thy will be done, thy will and not mine, which is imperfect and depraved." Another exiled minister, John Fox, wrote that book of martyrs, to which we are indebted for so many valuable records relating to the sufferers in queen Mary's reign. Bernard Gilpin, called the apostle of the north of England, was earnest both in preaching and encouraging young students, and establishing schools.

## Sect. 6.—*The Reformation of the church of Ireland.*

The separation of the church of Ireland from Rome, in the reign of Henry VIII., and its Reformation in the reign of Edward VI., took place under the management of George Browne, archbishop of Dublin, a zealous reformer, who was deprived of his dignity as archbishop under queen Mary. The church of Ireland was very happily preserved from persecution by the following circumstance. Dr. Cole having been sent with a

Digitized by Google

commission to put protestants to death, in his way stopped at Chester, where a maid servant, who heard him speak of this commission, took it out of the box, and put in a pack of cards in its stead. Dr. Cole found at Dublin, on opening the box, what had been done, but before he could get a new commission to persecute, the queen died, and her successor Elizabeth settled a pension on the servant. In Ireland, although the Reformation was established in the several parishes, most of the people were still attached to the Roman Catholic religion, and have remained so during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries even to this day. The efforts now made by the diffusion of the Scriptures, in English and Irish, and by the establishment of schools for the poor, will, doubtless, eventually help to rescue the population of Ireland from ignorance and error.

### Sect. 7.—*The Reformation of the church of Scotland.*

In the sixteenth century, Scotland was a separate kingdom from England. It is said that some of Wicliffe's disciples suffered for the truth at an early period. In the sixteenth century, PATRICK HAMILTON went to the continent, and got acquainted with Luther and Melancthon, and on his return brought their doctrines into Scotland, for which he was burnt by cardinal Beaton. He had written on religious subjects, and maintained amongst other things, "that a man is only justified by faith in Christ," and "that a good man doth good works; but good works do not make a good man."

Digitized by Google

Hamilton was executed in 1527, on the day on which he was condemned, lest his great connections should procure the king's pardon; and he suffered very joyfully, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." A dean named Forrat was also burnt. He had been accused of preaching on the epistles and gospels every Sunday to his parishioners.

Jeremy Russel, being apprehended in the diocese of Glasgow, comforted his fellow-prisoner, Alexander Kennedy, a youth aged 18 only, saying, "Brother, fear not; more mighty is he that is in us, than he that is in the world; the pain that we shall suffer is short, and shall be light, but our joy and consolation shall never have end; and, therefore, let us contend to enter in unto our master and Saviour by the same strait way, which he hath taken before us: death cannot destroy us; for it is destroyed already by him, for whose sake we suffer." They were burnt.

In 1543, Helen Stark was drowned, with her infant, because she had not prayed to the virgin Mary, especially at the time of her lying-in.

A great reformer, GEORGE WISHART, who had studied at Cambridge, and abroad, preached in different parts of Scotland, and when he was condemned to be burnt, prayed thus: "O immortal God! . . . we know surely that thy true servants must needs suffer, for thy name's sake, persecution, affliction, and troubles in this present life; but yet we desire thee, merciful Father, that thou wouldst defend and help thy congregation, which thou hast chosen before the beginning of the world." When he came to the fire he said three

Digitized by Google

times, "O Saviour of the world, have mercy upon me; Father of heaven, I commend my spirit into thy holy hands." Having prayed, he turned to the people, and said, "I exhort you that ye love the word of God for your salvation . . . . Show unto them, which have heard me, that my doctrine was no . . . . fable . . . . For the word's sake, and true gospel, I suffer this day by men, not sorrowfully, but with a glad heart. Consider and behold my visage, ye shall not see me change my countenance. This fire I fear not; and I pray you, if such persecution come upon you for the word's sake, not to fear them that slay the body, and have no power afterward to slay the soul." Then he prayed for them that accused him, "I beseech thee, Father of heaven, to forgive them that have of any ignorance, or else of any evil mind forged, lies." To the captain of the castle he said, "This fire torments my body; but no way abates my spirits." He was burnt in 1546, in the presence of cardinal Beaton.

Adam Wallace was also burnt for his zeal in spreading the principles of the Reformation. At the fire he said to the people, "Let it not offend you, that I suffer death this day for the truth's sake; for the disciple is not greater than his master."

Walter Mill was a priest, aged 82, much esteemed by the people. Being threatened with death, if he would not recant, he said, "I know I must die once; I will not recant the truth; for I am corn, I am no chaff; I will not be blown away with the wind, nor burst with the flail, I will abide both." Being bid to pass to the stake,

Digitized by Google

he said, "Nay, but if thou wilt put me up with thy hand, thou shalt see me pass up gladly; for by the law of God I am forbidden to lay hand upon myself." Being put, he ascended gladly, saying, "I will go up unto the altar of God." He was burnt in 1558, and by his death the people of all conditions were so moved, that many made open profession of the truth. The nobles of Scotland were indeed so anxious for the Reformation, that notwithstanding the endeavours of the queen regent, who was assisted by the court of France, to oppose it, the Reformation was established in 1560, and in 1561 Mary, queen of Scotland, the young widow of Francis II., returned from France to her own country.

Two men of note among the reformers were, EASKINE, laird of Dun, who was appointed one of the superintendants of the church of Scotland, and JOHN KNOX.

KNOX was an eloquent and bold reformer, but often too rash and severe. He had, by hearing Wishart and other reformed teachers, imbibed their principles. He introduced the presbyterian form of church government, from Geneva into Scotland. He told his people, "it was his desire to finish his preaching upon the history of Christ's passion." A day or two before his death, in 1572, he said to the elders and deacons of the church, "The time is approaching, for which I have long thirsted, wherein I shall be released from all my cares, and be with my Saviour Christ for ever." Being asked by some "if his pains were great," he answered, "That he did not esteem that pain, which would be unto him the end of all troubles,

Digitized by Google

and beginning of eternal joys." He remarked that "he had been often assaulted by Satan when in health, who had tempted him to despair on account of his sins; but that the subtle serpent, in this sickness, sought to persuade him that his labours in the ministry, and his fidelity in that service, had merited heaven and immortality." He added that his mind was comforted by those Scriptures, "What hast thou, that thou hast not received?" and, "Not I, but the grace of God which was in me." Often, after deep meditation, he used these words, "O serve the Lord in fear, and death shall not be troublesome unto you: blessed is the death of those that have part in the death of Jesus."

## Sect. 8.—*Remarks on the Reformation in the British dominions.*

Thus was the Reformation settled in Great Britain; an event which some persons suppose to have been the fulfilment of the prophecy in Rev. xi. 13; Great Britain having been one of the horns, or kingdoms, which once belonged to the Roman Catholic world.

The above account of these martyr-reformers shows us, that religion is no trifle, but a most important thing; so valuable, that it even outweighs wealth and friends, pleasure and pain, the world, and even life itself. We have seen that heartfelt religion consists in more than outward forms and ceremonies, and that the form of godliness is little worth, unless accompanied with the power of godliness.

Digitized by Google

It has clearly appeared, also, that the Lord is a faithful God, who "keepeth his covenant and promise;" for which of all these martyrs did he forsake in the hour of trial? not one of them did he fail to support. They called upon him, and he answered their prayers. "Precious in the sight of the Lord was the death of his saints;" and precious to those saints was the death of their Lord. They did not trust in their own works, or even their own blood of martyrdom, to cleanse them from their sins: no: they "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

It is equally clear that they relied on the Holy Spirit of God, as their sanctifier and comforter. They knew too well their own sinfulness and weakness to depend upon themselves. The doctrine of divine grace is delightfully illustrated in their feelings and expressions; for their words were words of wisdom, and soberness, and truth: not wild, not fanciful, not unscriptural. Is the reader then afflicted? whether distressed in mind, body, or estate, the records in this chapter may, with the blessing of God, afford great support if attentively considered; for, some of these martyrs did suffer in mind, even when near death, as their Saviour did in Gethsemane the night before he suffered; yet they were afterwards sustained, and even filled with joy. They also endured bodily pains too great to be expressed. As for worldly possessions, they parted with liberty and wealth, and even dearest friends, that they might be conformed to their Saviour, and admitted to "see him as he is." Let the consideration then of what believers of our own country passed through,

Digitized by Google

encourage and support suffering Christians in the present day.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE REFORMATION IN SPAIN AND THE NETHERLANDS.

### Sect. 1.—*The Reformation in Spain.*

As early as the year 1440, we find that great numbers of people were persecuted by the inquisitors, because they disliked the Roman church. They were driven out of the highlands of Durango, in Biscay, to Valladolid and Domingo de Calcada, and burnt alive. They were probably some of the Albigenses; unless, indeed, they had preserved a pure Christian faith from the earlier ages, in the mountains, and were descendants of the ancient Spanish church.

Between the years 1550 and 1560, some eminent Spanish divines, who were sent by the emperor Charles V. and his son Philip, into Germany, England, and Flanders, to convert the Protestants, became Protestants themselves, from conversing with, and carefully reading the works of the reformers. Upon returning to Spain, they preached these doctrines to their countrymen; and with great success, till the cruel inquisitors put a stop to their endeavours. The following martyrs during the persecution should be mentioned, although the Reformation could not be established in Spain.

Dr. Augustine Cazalla, of Salamanca, chap-



Digitized by Google

lain to the emperor Charles V. and an eloquent preacher, was imprisoned at Valladolid, and burnt, with thirteen others, amongst whom were his brother Francis, and sister Blanche. His mother, Leonora de Vivera, at whose house the Protestants worshipped, and who died in prison, his three brothers and two sisters, and their servants, had been converted by his means. Herezulo, an eminent and devout lawyer, was burnt at the same time. He had been converted by the instrumentality of Dr. Cazalla.

Dr. Perez, a fervent preacher, suffered in like manner. It has been supposed that the prince of Spain, Don Carlos, was privately put to death by his father Philip, for having discovered an attachment to the Protestant faith. The prince had witnessed the death of the above martyrs.

Shortly after, Don Carlos de Seso, a nobleman, was burnt, with forty other Protestants. Leonora de Cisneros, widow of the martyr Herezulo, after several years imprisonment in the inquisition of Valladolid, was burnt, and suffered with the same fortitude as her husband.

The Reformation had been preached at Seville by Dr. Egidio, who was named by Charles V. bishop of Tortosa, but before his consecration was put in the prison of the inquisition. After his death, his bones were burnt, as those of a Protestant. John Pontio de Leon, a nobleman, converted under Dr. Egidio's ministry, was burnt, with several others, at Seville. Dr. Constantino Pontio, chaplain to Charles V., died in the prison of the inquisition, and his body, with his books against the Roman church, were burnt. He was

Digitized by Google

a man of great learning, and a very eloquent preacher, and had attended Philip, when prince of Spain, into Flanders. He had refused high earthly preferment, saying, "I am content with what I have." John Gonsalvo, a pious preacher, converted under Dr. Egidio's ministry, sang part of the 15th Psalm when going to the stake, and said to his sister, who was to be burnt with him, "Be of good courage, dear sister, and keep the faith;" for which he was strangled. Juliano Fernando was burnt for having secretly imported and dispersed Spanish Bibles in Spain, which had been printed in Germany. To a number of Protestants who had on their clothes for martyrdom at the stake, he said, "Dear brethren and sisters, be of good courage, and triumph over death." Several monks of St. Isidore, in Seville, who had embraced the Protestant faith, escaped to Frankfort and Geneva. John de Leon, one of them, was going with John Fernaidel, another Spanish confessor, to England, when he was seized at Middleburgh, in order to be sent to Seville. De Leon then said to his friend, "God calls us to suffer for his gospel: if we do not forsake God, he will not forsake us." He endured much, and patiently, till he was burnt at Seville. Christopher Losada, a physician, burnt at the same time, suffered death with joy. Christopher Aurelio, a learned divine, who, from reading the Scriptures, had forsaken the Roman Catholic faith, was burnt, "triumphing," it is said, "over death as a conquered enemy."—Garsias Arias, called Blanco, a monk of St. Isidore, though once a persecuter, became a pious Protestant, and was burnt at



Digitized by Google

Seville. Ferdinando à Sancto Johanne, a young but learned professor in the college of St. Isidore, was burnt also; and with his hands and eyes showed that he praised God, whom he was not permitted (being gagged) to praise with his lips. Maria Bohonquia, a young lady of great piety, had learnt much of the Latin Bible by heart; and began to sing praises when going to be burnt, but was gagged. Her sister Jane died through the severity of the tortures in prison. Several other women, some of them of high quality, deeply versed in the Holy Scriptures, were burnt, both at Valladolid and Seville. Francis Romanes, a Spanish merchant, who had embraced Protestantism at Bremen, was burnt in Spain, repeating part of the 7th Psalm whilst life lasted. A person at Toledo was burnt for writing, in a beautiful manner, and hanging up in his house, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Commandments, and, especially, because he put in the second commandment against image worship with the others.

Thus was the cruelty of the inquisitors permitted to triumph over the Reformation, and stifle it in Spain; in which country two Englishmen, Royle, who assisted Tyndal in translating the Scriptures, and Nicholas Burton, a merchant, had been also put to death for their religion.

## Sect. 2.—*The Reformation in the Netherlands.*

The Netherlands, at the time of the Reformation, were under the dominion of Charles V. emperor of Germany, and king of Spain. The Protestant faith having been received with joy in

Digitized by Google

the Netherlands, its professors met with severe calamities, which became the more frequent when many of the nobles and others struggled for civil liberty. Philip II. not only established the inquisition, but appointed a very cruel governor, Ferdinand duke of Alva, in the Netherlands, under whose government several thousand Protestants perished by the hands of the executioner; whilst others, who survived, fled to Holland, and formed the congregations called the Walloon churches. Several of the provinces of the Netherlands, (Holland and others,) at length, under William prince of Orange, threw off subjection to the king of Spain, and became the republic of the seven United Provinces.

Amidst these political contentions for liberty, we read of many who fell martyrs in their Redeemer's cause, "contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints."

When Wendelmuta, a widow, was in prison, a noble matron, who loved her, came to her, and said, "My Wendelmuta, why do you not keep silence, and think secretly in your heart these things which you believe, that you may lengthen life?" But she answered, "You know not what you say. It is written, 'With the heart we believe to righteousness, and with the tongue we confess to salvation.'" To a person that told her she had not yet tasted death, she said, "I have not, and I shall not; for Christ hath said, Whosoever keepeth his word, shall not taste of death for ever." When she heard her sentence, she said, "I am now dead, but Christ's Spirit now quickeneth me: for I live in Christ, and Christ



Digitized by Google

my Redeemer, whose name I have confessed, in me. If I have wronged any, I desire forgiveness."

Three persons named Scoblant, Hues, and Coomans, apprehended at Antwerp, wrote thus to some fellow Protestants:—"We are not comfortless in confinement, for we have faith: we fear not affliction, for we have hope: and we forgive our enemies, for we have charity . . . . we desire not to be released, but to be blessed with fortitude: we ask not liberty, but the power of perseverance: and wish for no change in our condition, but that which places a crown of martyrdom upon our heads." Scoblant, at the stake, said the Lord's prayer, and sang the 40th Psalm. Hues died in prison. Coomans went joyfully to the place of martyrdom.

When four Dutch clergymen, Vas, Jan, Janson, and Simonson, were strangled and burnt at the Hague, the father of Jan said to him,—"Dear son, suffer courageously, a crown of eternal life is prepared for you:" his sister also exclaimed, "Brother, be courageous,—your sufferings will not last long,—the door of eternal life is open to you."

Voes, Esch, and Lambert, Augustinian monks, were burnt for becoming Protestants, singing amidst the flames the "Te Deum,"—the Hymn which in the morning service of the church of England begins—"We praise thee, O God, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord." "God forbid, (said Voes,) that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

John de Backer, a clergyman at the Hague,

Digitized by Google

was also burnt. His father said, "He surrendered him as Abraham did Isaac." "O death," (said he at the stake,) "where is thy sting?" For his enemies he prayed with his last breath, "Lord Jesus forgive them, they know not what they do."

Cornelius Hallewin of Antwerp, and Harman of Amsterdam, being offered a cross, with a promise that they should be beheaded and not burnt if they would take it in their hands, said, "They would not give the least sign of betraying the truth, and that it was all one to them what death they endured, so that they died in and for the Lord: the pain could last but for a while, but the glory to come was eternal."

Guy de Brez, a French minister, was prisoner in the castle of Tournay. A lady who visited him, said, "She wondered how he could eat, or drink, or sleep in quiet." "Madam," (said he,) "my chains do not terrify me, or break my sleep, on the contrary, I glory and take delight therein, esteeming them at an higher rate than chains and rings of gold, or jewels of any price whatever. The rattling of my chains is like the effect of an instrument of music in my ears; not that such an effect comes merely from my chains, but it is because I am bound therewith for maintaining the truth of the gospel." He wrote thus in a letter to his wife,—"This world is not the place of our rest: no, heaven is our home, this is but the place of our banishment.—Take into your consideration the honour the Lord doth you, in giving you an husband that is not only called to be a minister of Christ's gospel, but also so highly advanced of God, as to be accounted worthy to

Digitized by Google

partake of the crown of martyrdom. It is an honour which the angels in heaven are not capable of. All my former discourses were as a blind man's of colours, in comparison of my present feeling. Oh what a precious comforter is a good conscience! I have profited more in the school of this prison, than I did before in all my life."

Nicaise of Tournay, for refusing to live according to the customs of the Romish church, was led to execution, and seeing a multitude of people, he said, "Ye men of Tournay, open your eyes; awake ye that sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light." As he was fastened to the stake, he said, "Eternal Father, have pity upon me, according as thou hast promised to all that ask the same of thee in thy Son's name."

At Lisle, Robert Ogvier and his son Baudicon were condemned. The friars having put a crucifix betwixt the old man's hands, Baudicon said, "Alas, father, will you be an idolater even at the last hour?" and then pulling it out of his hands, threw it away, saying, "Why should the people be offended with us, for not receiving a crucifix? We bear upon our hearts the cross of Christ, the Son of the everliving God, feeling his word written therein, as in letters of gold." Baudicon began to sing at the stake the 16th Psalm, and said to his father, "Thousands of angels are ready to receive us, rejoicing to see us thus witnessing the truth before the world. Let us be glad and rejoice, for the joys of heaven are set open to us." When the fire was kindled, he often said to his father,—"Faint not, father, nor be afraid; yet a

Digitized by Google

very little while, and we shall enter into the heavenly mansions." Their last words were, "Jesus Christ, thou Son of God, into thy hands we commend our spirits."

Jane, the wife of Robert Ogvier, whilst in prison, (separated from her second son Martin,) was drawn into error by a monk. When Martin understood this, he said, "O mother, what have you done? Have you denied him, who hath redeemed you? What evil hath he done you, that you should requite him with so great an injury and dishonour?" His mother hearing this, with tears cried out,—"O Father of mercies, be merciful to me miserable sinner, and cover my transgression under the righteousness of thy blessed Son. Lord, enable me with strength from above to stand to my first confession, and make me steadfast therein, even to my last breath." Jane and her son having been condemned, they said, "This is the wished for hour. Our day of gladness is come." "Let us not" (said Martin) "forget to be thankful for the honour the Lord doth us, in conforming us to the image of his Son. Let us remember those that have traced this death before us, for this is the highway to the kingdom of heaven. Let us, good mother, go on boldly out of the camp with the Son of God, bearing his reproach with all his holy martyrs, for so we shall find passage into the glorious kingdom of the everliving God." To persons who reviled, Martin replied, "Your curses our God will this day turn into blessings, in the sight of all his holy angels." Somebody having endeavoured to stagger Martin, by the consideration of the multitude that believed

Digitized by Google

not as he did, his mother said, "Christ Jesus our Lord affirmed, that it is the wide gate and broad way that leadeth to destruction, and that many go in thereat: but that the gate is strait that leadeth to life, and few there be that find it. Do you then doubt whether we are in the strait way, or no, when you behold our sufferings." Martin being asked, "Whether he thought himself wiser than so many learned doctors?" answered, "Doth not Christ our Lord tell us, That his Father hath hid the secrets of his kingdom from the wise and prudent, and revealed them to babes?" Two men of great authority came into the prison to Martin, and persuading him to recant, promised him money, &c. He answered, "You lay before me many temporal things; but do you think me so unwise, as to forsake an eternal kingdom, for a short transitory life? No, sirs, it is too late to speak to me now of worldly things: speak of those spiritual ones, which God hath prepared for me to-day in his kingdom." The mother and son were burnt together. When the fire was kindled, lifting up their hands to heaven in holy accord, they said, "Lord Jesus, into thy hands we commend our spirits."

Austin, a German, burnt at Bruges, when requested by a monk "to have pity upon his own soul," replied, "The care I take of my soul is evident, by willingly giving my body to be burnt, sooner than sin against my conscience." Godfrid being called an heretic at the stake, said, "Call me not heretic, but an unprofitable servant of Christ." Charles Cormick, a friar of Ghent, after reading the works of the Protestants, left the

Digitized by Google

church of Rome, and being offered preferment if he would return, he answered,—"I thank you for your intended kindness, but cannot accept your offer without offending God. Wealth badly obtained is poverty, and promotion which injures the conscience is degradation. I am ready to suffer any thing, except those horrors of mind which attend such as, for worldly views, sin against conviction."

Giles Tillsman, of Brussels, might have escaped from prison, the doors being set open, but he would not, lest he should bring his keeper into danger. At the stake, he said, "My hope is directly to go into Paradise. I fear not this great pile of wood, whereof some part might have been spared to warm the poor, but will pass through it to my Saviour."

Francis d'Alost, being conducted to prison, said, "You think to deprive me of life, and thereby to injure me, but you are deceived; it is as if you took counters from me, to fill my hand with a great sum of gold." As he went to suffer, he used these words, "I must now shortly put off this my tabernacle, which the love of Jesus my Lord constraineth me to do."

John Herwyn, a soldier of Flanders, was converted when he came to England on some occasion, and was condemned for this on his return. When two malefactors in the prison fled, he might also have escaped, but, fearing his flight might be imputed to pious fellow Christians, he would not go away. As he passed from the court and saw the people, he said, "Whilst I gave myself to drunkenness, I was never in danger of these bands,

Digitized by Google

(lifting up his hands which were bound,) but no sooner did I begin to live a godly life, than the world made war upon me and became my enemy, persecuting and imprisoning me." He sang Psalm xxx. at the stake, and said, "Brethren, I fight under the standard of my great Lord and Captain, Christ: follow me, when God of his goodness shall call you to it."

William Tovart, a martyr of Antwerp, (where he was drowned,) in a pious letter thus expressed, as he very safely and scripturally might, his belief of the happiness of martyrs. "The eternal Son of God will confess their names before his heavenly Father, and his holy angels. They shall be clad with white robes, and shine as the sun in the kingdom of heaven, filled with gladness in the presence of the Lamb. They shall eat of the fruit of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

It pleased God to bestow very learned and pious men upon the reformed church in the United Provinces, by whose means Protestantism, at an early period, took deep root and flourished, not in name only, but in power and truth. Amongst others were Tremellius and Junius.

Tremellius was a Jew, from whose heart the veil had been taken away, and who had been led by the Holy Spirit to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah, and the Son of God.—The Jews, who had condemned our Saviour, had said, "Not this man but Barabbas;" Tremellius, when near his end, glorying in Christ alone, and renouncing whatever came in competition with him, used very different words,—"Not Barabbas but Jesus."

Digitized by Google

The conversion of Junius, who was by birth a Christian, to true piety, was also very extraordinary. The enmity of his mind against God, had gone so far as to lead him to doubt God's providence; but God, who is rich in mercy, gave him a proof not only of his preserving providence, by deliverance in a tumult, but even of his enlightening grace.—"Opening the first chapter of St. John's gospel, I read" (says he) "part of the chapter, and was so struck with what I read, that I instantly perceived the divinity of the subject, and the authority and majesty of the Scriptures, greatly to surpass all human eloquence. I trembled,—my mind was confounded,—and I was so much affected all that day, that I hardly knew who I myself was. But thou, my Lord God, didst remember me in thy boundless mercy, and receive a lost sheep into thy flock! From that time, when the Almighty had granted me so great a portion of his Holy Spirit, I began to read the Bible, and treat other books more coldly and negligently." Happy exchange!—that of profane for sacred literature; that of broken cisterns for the fountain of living waters!

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE REFORMATION IN POLAND, HUNGARY, AND TRANSYLVANIA.

When the United Brethren were driven from Bohemia, about the year 1548, many went to Upper Poland, and their bishop, George Israel, was very successful in planting the gospel. In



Digitized by Google

Lower Poland, the Reformation was promoted by Lismannus, a Franciscan monk, the Queen Dowager's chaplain, and by Felix Cruciger, (a Zuinglian,) superintendent of the churches. Afterwards, the churches of Upper and Lower Poland were united. The king of Poland, Sigismund Augustus, protected the reformers. John a Lasco, a Pole of noble family, leaving the Roman church, endured, at an early period of the Reformation, many afflictions. In king Edward VI.'s reign, he was the minister of a foreign congregation in London, but in queen Mary's reign was compelled to leave the kingdom, and returning, after many years' absence, to Poland, gained the esteem of the king, and died in 1560.

Hungary had been in some degree enlightened by the Waldenses and the Hussites, before Luther's books became the means of instruction in that country, and in Transylvania. These, however, were much read. Young noblemen went to pursue their studies at Wittenberg, and Martin Cyriacus appeared as a teacher of the Reformation in Hungary. Lewis, king of Hungary, was, however, an enemy to the reformers; whilst George, marquis of Brandenburg, encouraged them; as did Thurzo, the pious bishop of Breslaw, and James of Saltza, his successor. Hesse was an eminent reformer during many years, at Breslaw. By king Ferdinand they were treated with mildness; but with severity by John Czepuss, who, with the assistance of the Turks, gained the crown of Hungary. Matthias Devay, a great reformer in that kingdom, was imprisoned. In Transylvania, meanwhile, John Hunter greatly

Digitized by Google

promoted the Protestant faith. Some of the congregations of Hungary and Transylvania preferred the Augsburg confession of faith, others the confession of Switzerland. Stephen Zegedin approved of the latter. He was a teacher of youth in learning and religion, and suffered many hardships, being driven from place to place: he was ill treated also by the Turks, for refusing to renounce the gospel, but he was afterwards delivered out of these troubles. Although the Reformation in Hungary and Transylvania met with great opposition at first, several sovereigns granted afterwards religious liberty to the Protestants. Under one of these sovereigns, John Sigismund of Transylvania, the sect of Unitarians (denying the Scripture doctrine of the divinity of the Lord Jesus) arose.

When the difficulties attending such a work as the Reformation, in different kingdoms of Europe, are well considered, and its blessed effects duly valued, the reader must surely adore the manifold wisdom, power, and grace displayed towards the Christian church, and thankfully exclaim—"What hath God wrought!"



Digitized by Google

# BOOK VIII.

## CHRISTIAN RECORDS RESPECTING THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.

## CHAPTER I.

### PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL.

THE Reformation having checked the Roman pontiffs, and even deprived them of a great part of their spiritual dominion in Europe, they began to direct their attention to other quarters of the world. The society of Jesuits, established by Ignatius Loyola in 1540, was much employed in the conversion of the African, American, and Indian heathens. But the credit of their labours was lessened, both by the corrupt motives which appeared to govern these zealous missionaries, and by the unchristian means which they adopted. After the example of the Jesuits, the Dominicans and Franciscans, and other orders sent out missionaries. Amongst the Jesuits engaged in the propagation of the gospel, Francis Xavier obtained high reputation. In the 16th century, this great man set sail for the Portuguese settlements in India, and spread the knowledge of Christianity, as professed by the church of Rome, in many parts of the Continent, and in several of the islands. From thence he passed into Japan, and laid the foundations of a church, which flourished during many years. His zeal prompted him to attempt

Digitized by Google

the conversion of the empire of China; and he embarked for that country, but died in sight of it. After his death, other members of his order went into China, the chief of whom was Matthew Ricci.

During the same century, fourteen Protestant missionaries were sent from Geneva to convert the Americans, by desire of admiral Coligni; but difficulties prevented the wished for success.

In the seventeenth century, pope Gregory XV. founded at Rome a college for the propagation of the Roman faith. Another of a similar kind was added by pope Urban VIII. which owed its origin to the zeal and generosity of John Baptist Viles, a Spanish nobleman. France produced other establishments of this nature; the "Congregation of priests of foreign missions," the "Parisian Seminary for the missions abroad," and "the Congregation of the holy sacrament." A great number of missionaries were sent to different parts, who converted multitudes to the outward profession of Christianity. These missionaries were either Jesuits, Dominicans, Franciscans, or Capuchins; who, though engaged in one common design, opposed each other. A mission established at Madura, in India, was undertaken by Robert de Nobili, a Jesuit.

Christianity was, during this century, first conveyed to the kingdoms of Siam, Tonquin, and Cochin-China, by a mission of the Jesuits, under the direction of Alexander of Rhodes, a native of Avignon. A numerous society of Jesuits, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Capuchins, proceeded also to China with a view to enlighten that vast



Digitized by Google

empire with the knowledge of the gospel; and missionaries, particularly the Jesuits, were successful in the islands of Japan.

The example of the Roman Catholics excited a pious emulation in Protestants, to promote their purer form of Christianity amongst the heathen nations. King Charles I. had expressed, in his charter to the English puritans who settled in North America, that they should try to win the heathen natives to the knowledge and obedience of the Saviour of mankind. Accordingly, an independent minister, named Elliot, felt strongly disposed to attempt their conversion. He was much affected, also, with the seal of the Massachusset colony,—a poor Indian, having a label from his mouth, with these words, "Come over and help us." Having learnt the Indian language, and formed a grammar, he wrote "Prayers and pains, through faith in Christ Jesus, will do any thing." He preached to five Indian congregations. He translated the whole Bible into the Indian tongue, besides other books. When asked how he could bear the death of some of his children, he meekly replied: "My desire was, that they should serve God on earth; but, if God will choose to have them rather serve him in heaven, I have nothing to object against it: his will be done." He said upon his death-bed, "It is a sad thing when that one thing, the *Spirit of God*, is wanting in a sermon."

The family of the Mayhews was eminent for missionary zeal. The Rev. T. Mayhew became a preacher to the heathen. In a few years there were two hundred and eighty Indians who

Digitized by Google

had become Christians. After his death, his father, the governor of Martha's Vineyard, felt so much concern for the Indians, that, seeing no probability of a regular minister to succeed his son, he applied himself to the language, laboured among them to the age of ninety-three, and had a grandson and great grandson, who succeeded him in the service of the heathen.

Hiacoomes, a North American Indian, was a very great instrument of bringing his wretched neighbours to a saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; and God gave him the honour, not only of doing much for some, but also of suffering much from others of those unhappy savages. Once, when the pawaws were boasting that they could kill all the praying Indians if they would, Hiacoomes replied, "Let all the pawaws in the island come together, I'll venture myself in the midst of them; let them use all their witchcrafts, with the help of God I'll tread upon them all."

Miohqsoo, a chief, sent a messenger to Hiacoomes, entreating him to come to him. Hiacoomes gladly embraced this opportunity to instruct the chief and the Indians, declaring all things which he had learnt concerning God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Miohqsoo asked him, "How many gods the English worshipped?" Hiacoomes answered, "One, and no more." Upon which Miohqsoo reckoned about thirty-seven gods which he had; "and shall I," said he, "throw away all these thirty-seven for the sake of one only?" "I," (said Hiacoomes,) "for my part, have thrown away all these, and many more, some years ago;

Digitized by Google

and yet I am preserved, as you see, to this day." "True," (said Miohqsoo,) "and, therefore, I will throw away all my gods too, and serve that one God with you."

Mutark, an Indian chief, preached the mysteries of the Christian faith to his subjects in Martha's Vineyard, and, a little before his death, expressed his willingness to die, and said to his daughters, "Mourn not for me, but mourn for yourselves and for your sins."

Success having thus attended the efforts of the Puritans, members of the church of England formed "A Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts," which had for the chief object, to promote Christianity in the colonies, and its exertions have been mostly directed to North America, among professed Christians.

The efforts of the Dutch were directed to the islands of Ceylon and Formosa, the coast of Malabar, and other Asiatic settlements, which they had acquired by their industry, or conquered from the Portuguese. At Ceylon, where Baldeus and De Bruge were eminent missionaries, great numbers were converted to the Christian faith.

The missionaries of the church of Rome were banished from Abyssinia, where their zeal and violence had brought on war between the emperor and his subjects, and occasioned the persecution of members of the ancient Abyssinian church.

The Capuchin missionaries, after enduring great hardships, persuaded the kings of Benin and Awerri, and the queen of Metemba, to embrace Christianity. The conversions, however, which

Digitized by Google

took place among the Africans, were very imperfect and limited.

The colonies from Spain, Portugal, and France, which were established in America, were instrumental in spreading some faint notions of Christianity among the conquered and the neighbouring nations. The Jesuits, under the pretence of promoting the Christian religion, built several towns, and made laws in several provinces both in South and North America. The most celebrated of these settlements was in the province of Paraguay, where they formed a republic of Indians, and governed the people by mild but efficacious measures, constructed with peculiar ingenuity. In order to prevent all communication between the Indians and Europeans, the Spanish language was forbidden throughout this new empire; and the natives were accustomed to regard the Jesuits, not only as their instructors, but as their sovereigns, till the mystery of this government was laid open. A war then ensuing between the Spaniards and Portuguese, and the Indians, an effectual check was given to the ambition of the Jesuits.

The inhabitants of Finland and Lapland received, from some zealous Swedish missionaries, the light of the gospel in those cheerless northern regions which they inhabit.

Digitized by Google

## CHAPTER II.

### PERSECUTIONS OF THE CHURCH.

#### SECT. 1.—*Persecution in Japan, &c.*

THE Roman Catholics in China, and their Chinese converts, were sometimes, indeed, protected, although sometimes oppressed; but the converts in the islands of Japan underwent a very severe persecution from the heathen emperor, in which several thousands were put to death. The Dutch were forced to leave the island of Formosa by a Chinese pirate, when near thirty ministers were ruined, some beheaded, and their wives made slaves.

#### SECT. 2.—*Persecution in Malabar.*

NOT only do we find on record persecutions carried on by the heathen; but faithful history brings too often before us the sufferings of those who conscientiously differed from the Roman Catholics.

On the coast of Malabar in the East Indies, the Syrian Christians of St. Thomas were greatly injured, in their spiritual interests, by the Roman Catholic missionaries, who *burned their ancient books*, and put their bishop Atalla to death in the Inquisition at Goa; upon whose martyrdom a hymn was composed. Many of their churches were seduced from their ancient faith to the communion of the church of Rome. Happily those

Digitized by Google

Syrian Christians of St. Thomas have recently found friends in British Christians anxious not to destroy, but to restore their ancient church; and, with this view, missionaries from England are teachers in a college built to educate students for the ministry.

### Sect. 3.—*Persecution in the Valtoline.*

In the district called the Valtoline, near Italy, which included about eight towns and villages, the Roman Catholics hanged, burned, drowned, beheaded, boiled in oil, &c. numbers of Protestants. They murdered many whilst they were met for public worship. A nobleman begged he might be spared on account of his large family of children. This was refused, unless he would renounce his faith. "God forbid," said he, "that to save this temporal life I should deny my Redeemer, and perish eternally." He was cut to pieces. A lady, when exhorted to change her religion and save her infant's life, replied, "I did not forsake my estate in Italy to renounce Christ in the Valtoline. As to my infant, why should I not deliver him up to death, since God delivered up his Son for us?" The persecutors murdered the lady, and put the child to a Roman Catholic nurse. Another Protestant lady was indecently led through the streets, and was struck on the cheek, and asked, "why she did not implore mercy of the saints?" She replied, "My trust and salvation is in Jesus Christ only; it is not the saints, or the Virgin Mary, but my Redeemer alone that can save me." She was stoned to

Digitized by Google

death. Other sufferers were hunted to the woods to which they fled, and starved in the caves in which they hid themselves, till Protestantism was quite destroyed in the district called the Valtoline. Five hundred persons, it is said, were put to death.

## Sect. 4.—*Persecution in Bohemia.*

During the sixteenth century, many of the Protestants of Bohemia were banished to Poland and Prussia, in consequence of a refusal to assist their king, Ferdinand V., in the unjust war carried on by Charles V. and the Roman Catholics, against the elector of Saxony and the Protestants of Germany. Those who had remained behind in Bohemia and Moravia, obtained permission, in 1564, to open their churches. Many emigrants, therefore, returned home. But their enemies again raised a persecution, expecting to obtain their aim through the influence of Joachim von Neuhaus, chancellor of Bohemia, who went for this purpose, in 1565, to Vienna. He prevailed against the mild disposition of the emperor, who set his name to a decree against the United Brethren, but which, by God's providence, failed of effect. For as the chancellor was hastening to Bohemia, and crossing the Danube near the gates of Vienna, part of the bridge gave way, and he fell, with his carriage and horses, into the river. A nobleman on horseback, who saved himself by swimming, seeing the chancellor rise above the water, seized him by the golden chain of his order, and kept his head above water, but he was dead.

Digitized by Google

The boat, containing the elder by which so many were doomed to death, was carried away by the stream, and never more heard of. The nobleman who thus escaped, was so afflicted, that he joined the United Brethren's church.

The peace afterwards enjoyed by the Protestants in Bohemia, was followed by spiritual declension. —"Together with liberty in religion," (says Comenius, a bishop among the United Brethren,) "the liberty of the flesh began by degrees to spring up." It must not, therefore, be matter of surprise, that in the following persecution, the Protestants endured many sufferings, of which some could not be numbered among their sufferings for Christ's sake.

After the death of the emperor Rodolph, the Roman Catholics spared no pains to put the resolutions of the council of Trent in force against the Protestants in Bohemia, and, by continual vexation and oppression, endeavoured to excite the people to resistance. The Protestants, driven to despair, in their impatience flew to arms, threw off their allegiance to king Ferdinand, (who had attacked their religious liberties, though he had sworn to maintain them,) and chose Frederic elector of the Palatinate, for their king. This is what their enemies wished, for now they had a plea for making war against them as rebels; and the Protestants in Bohemia were nearly destroyed, after their defeat near Prague, in 1620. Twenty-seven of the patrons of the Protestants at Prague were beheaded. They spent the greatest part of the night, before they suffered, in prayer, singing hymns, and edifying conversation. It is plain,



Digitized by Google

from all circumstances, and their own expressions, that the cheerfulness with which they met death, proceeded from a conviction that they were called upon to lay down their lives for their confession of the truths of the gospel. If they had been willing to deny them, and to submit to the pope's yoke, their offence against the state would probably have been overlooked, and their lives spared.

The first led to the scaffold, was count Schlick, the principal patron of the United Brethren's church; a man of great talents and unshaken piety. When the report of the gun was heard, he exclaimed,—"That is the signal for our death, and I shall be the first: but thou, O Lord Jesus! have mercy upon us!" Upon the scaffold, he turned his face towards the morning sun, and exclaimed, "Thou Sun of righteousness, Lord Jesus Christ! help me to penetrate through the darkness of death, to thy everlasting light."

After him, Wenceslas von Budowa, one of the United Brethren, was brought upon the scaffold. He was seventy-four years of age, of great learning, and had filled many offices under the emperor Rodolph. When his secretary told him, that a report had been spread that he had died of a broken heart; he said, smiling, "What! die of a broken heart! I never felt more glad of heart, than in my present situation. Behold my paradise, (pointing to the Bible,) never did it afford me such delicious fruit, as at this time." Among others who visited him in prison, were two friars, who informed him that they were come "to show his Lordship the way to heaven." He remarked

Digitized by Google

in his reply, "I know of no way to heaven but by him who has said, I am the way, and the truth, and the life." On the day of his execution, two Jesuits called upon him, and declared their wish to save his soul. He answered, "I only wish that you were as well assured of the salvation of your souls, as I am of mine. Praise and thanks be to God, who, by his Spirit, has assured me of my salvation, by the blood of the Lamb. I know that a crown of righteousness is reserved for me." They objected, "That that was not meant for him, for Paul had only spoken concerning himself." "Nay," replied he, "you are surely mistaken, for the apostle himself adds, 'and not for me only, but for all them that love his appearing.'" He ascended the scaffold with a cheerful countenance, uncovered his head, and, stroking down his grey hair, exclaimed, "Ye hoary locks, what great honour is put upon you, that you are now to be adorned with a martyr's crown!"

Harant, another nobleman, who had travelled much in Europe, Asia, and Africa, said at the block, "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit. In thee have I always trusted; receive me, therefore, my blessed Redeemer."

Baron von Kapplich was a venerable man, eighty-six years old, who had served both the emperor Rodolph, and his successor, in several high offices of state. On the day of execution, he ordered his servant to dress him in his finest linen, and, turning to the minister, said, "I am putting on my wedding dress." The minister answered, "How much more glorious is the robe of Christ's righteousness to your soul!" At the block he ex



Digitized by Google

claimed, "Lord Jesus! into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Baron Rugenia remarked, "I find that it pleases God to have his truth defended, not by our swords, but by our blood. I shall now be speedily with Christ."

Henry Otto von Loss, one of the patrons of the Brethren's church, cheerfully mounted the scaffold, where he fell prostrate as in adoration; then kneeled down, and exclaimed, "Into thy hands, O Jesus, I commend my spirit; have mercy upon me, and receive me into thine eternal glory."

Maximilian Hostialick at first dreaded death, the sins of his youth crowding upon his mind; but, by penitent regard to the blood of Christ, he regained peace, and, having repeated the song of Simeon, (St. Luke ii.) his head was struck off.

A Jesuit having failed in his endeavour to bring John Kutnaur to be a Roman Catholic, said, "These Protestants are impenetrable rocks." "You are mistaken," (said Kutnaur,) "Christ is the rock, and we are firmly fixed upon him." In like manner, and with the same joyful confession of their faith and hopes, they all laid down their lives: not one was prevailed upon to save his life, by denying the truth.

These noblemen, who belonged to different Protestant churches, it is plain, had no other view in voting for the elector Frederic, than to preserve their religious liberties, secured to them by the emperor Rodolph; and, although they were not strictly and properly martyrs, yet they bore a firm testimony to the Protestant faith. This is one

Digitized by Google

amongst other instances, which show that believers seldom succeed when they take up the sword and the spear amidst their difficulties, instead of putting on the armour of patience, and the helmet of the Christian hope, and praying with earnestness to their heavenly Father, who can turn the hearts of princes, and control all worldly events. The ministers among the Protestants in Bohemia were afterwards banished, and also the whole Protestant nobility. Many hundred families fled into Silesia, Saxony, Brandenburg, Poland, Prussia, Hungary, Transylvania, and the Low Countries. Emigration, however, was rendered as difficult as possible to the common people, over whom strict watch was kept; yet many thousands found opportunity to follow their ministers. Churches and schools were shut up, and Bibles burnt.

The affairs of the Protestants, in Germany and Bohemia, fell thus into the most deplorable state, till Gustavus Adolphus, king of Sweden, undertook their defence, and gained great victories. He fell at the battle of Lutzen, in 1632. He was remarkable for prefacing his victories with public prayer and fasting, and for following them with a public thanksgiving. Before the battle of Lutzen, after exhorting his soldiers, he cast his eyes to heaven, and cried with a loud voice, "Jesus, vouchsafe this day to be my strong helper, and give me courage to fight for thy glory, and for the honour of thy name." His watch-word was, "God is with us."

At the peace of Westphalia, in 1648, ended this dreadful war of thirty years. However, the



Digitized by Google

United Brethren were still severely persecuted in Bohemia and Moravia, and some thousands fled to Silesia, Poland, Prussia, Saxony, and Upper Lusatia. Yet many were left in Bohemia and Moravia, who carefully, though in secret, sought to maintain pure evangelical doctrines, and to preserve and read the Bible and various edifying books, which they were obliged to conceal, sometimes even from their wives, children, and servants.

During the war above alluded to, between the emperor of Germany and the king of Sweden, the emperor's general, count Tilly, and his troops, were guilty of the most cruel proceedings against the Protestants in the towns they took; especially at Passewalk, Magdeburg, Hoxter, and in Saxony and Pomerania. The city of Lesna in Poland was burnt, and many of the inhabitants cruelly treated. It was destroyed by the Polish Roman Catholics, on account of its importance, having an university, &c. A count of Berstein had received persecuted Bohemians there. The churches of the Protestants were destroyed, and the ministers slain, in other places, as Karmin, Skochy, &c. and 5000 persons, besides children, were forced to wander in the marshes of Silesia, Lusatia, &c. They considered themselves descendants of the Waldenses, united to the Hussites. Several clergymen, and others, were cruelly put to death in Lithuania, when the Cossacks, Tartars, Russians, Transylvanians, and others, were in that country.

Digitized by Google

SECT. 5.—*Persecution in Ireland.*

FROM time to time, attempts were made to destroy the Protestant religion in Great Britain. As early as the reign of queen Elizabeth, in the sixteenth century, an immense fleet and army, called the Spanish Armada, came near our shores; and there were various instruments of torture on board. The English fleet, however, gained advantages over the Spanish, and a storm overtook and destroyed many ships on their way back to Spain. The good providence of Almighty God towards this kingdom, was again manifested in the reign of king James I.; for, when the Jesuits had contrived a plan for destroying the king and both houses of Parliament, by gunpowder placed in the cellars, the plot was happily discovered in time. A devout thanksgiving for this deliverance is appointed in the church of England, on the 5th of November annually. At length a conspiracy (that of the family of O'Neal) was formed to murder the English and Scotch Protestants of Ireland, on the feast of Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuits, (the 23rd of October,) in 1641. Dublin was preserved, by a happy discovery of the plot; but in other parts of Ireland, persons of each sex, and of every age and condition, were tortured and put to death, to the number, it is said, of 40,000. Some were drowned, others burnt, others hanged, others stabbed, others tied to horses' tails; these were some of the many cruel methods adopted. Bibles were often burnt. At Portendown Bridge, more than 1000 men,

Digitized by Google

women, and children, were compelled to throw themselves into the water. Longford, Sligo, Lisseanskeath, Kilmore, Armagh, Kilkenny, Munsher; the counties of Mayo, Antrim, Tipperary, &c. and, in short, all places where Protestants were to be found, became the "habitations of cruelty." Not even children, nor infants in the womb were spared. Yet it deserves to be remarked, that so great was the respect even of the Roman Catholics, for the very learned, charitable, and pious, bishop of Kilmore, (Dr. Bedell,) that though he and his family and friends suffered great calamities, they were not put to death. The bishop, who had conferred upon the Irish the inestimable gift of the Scriptures in their own language, soon died, giving the most pious exhortations to those around him. May the remembrance of this calamity excite no unholy feelings in Protestants; but, on the contrary, a desire to promote the welfare, by constant and unwearied endeavours to further the education of children in Ireland;—since ignorance often leads persons, who are guilty of dreadful crimes, to think they are doing God service. Between all the inhabitants of the British dominions, however divided in religious sentiments, may mutual good will, esteem for the Holy Scriptures, and loyalty to the government, be ever felt and cherished!

## Sect. 6.—*Persecution in France.*

The persecution in France, occasioned by the revocation of the edict of Nantes, took place under Louis XIV.—This edict had been made

Digitized by Google

by Henry IV. of France, in 1598, and secured to the Protestants civil and religious liberties.—Louis's ministers of state, and the Roman Catholic priests urged him to very severe measures, and the superstitious king thought it would be pleasing to God to bring back the Protestants to the church of Rome. Accordingly, some were condemned to the galleys, others were expelled from offices, trades, privileges, and employs: children were taken from them to be educated by Roman Catholics, and at seven years of age were made converts; others were made converts by gifts of money.

When the revocation of the edict passed, in 1685, dragoons were quartered upon the Protestants, saying, that the king would no longer suffer any Protestants in his kingdom; and, therefore, they must change their religion. This was the more cruel, as the Protestants had given great proofs of loyalty. Many indecent cruelties and tortures were practised. Some were pursued in the woods, and hunted in the fields, and shot at: ministers were sentenced to banishment, and only fifteen days allowed them to depart the kingdom. Their churches were destroyed. The sufferings of the ministers and others, who were sent to the galleys, seem to exceed all. Chained to the oar, they were exposed to the open air night and day, at all seasons, and received the lashes of a scourge, or the blows of a cane or rope's end. Instead of a bed, they were allowed only a hard board to sleep on, without any covering but their apparel. It should be mentioned to the honour of Anne, queen of England, that she, by her influence,

Digitized by Google

procured the release of many of the galley slaves. France lost, it has been said, several hundred thousand of her best subjects, who, to avoid these cruelties, fled to foreign realms, as England, Holland, Switzerland, and Germany.

### Sect. 7.—*Persecution in Piedmont.*

Those ancient sufferers the Waldenses of Piedmont, endured fresh afflictions in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In 1535, they appointed Peter Robert Olivetan to translate the Bible into French, and generously printed, at the expense of 1500 crowns of gold, this first Bible that appeared in the French tongue, as the gift of their parent church to the infant Protestant church of France. One of the Waldenses, named Martin Gonin, when on his way to Geneva, to get books for these good people, was taken prisoner, sent to Grenoble, and thrown into a river in 1536.

Some of the Waldenses lived in Provence, upon whom a time of heavy suffering came in 1545. The governor, Oppeda, fell upon the unarmed inhabitants. Several towns and villages were burnt to ashes, and four thousand men, women, and children slaughtered. The labourers were slain, their wives and daughters ill-treated, and infants murdered. Some women were shut up in a barn full of straw, and burnt; and when a soldier made a hole for some of them to escape, they were forced back by pikes. Some, who were found hid in caves, were taken to Cabrieres, and massacred. The rest were pursued through mountains, and reduced to great extremities.

Digitized by Google

Some went to Germany, Switzerland, and Geneva; and, after the storm had passed, returned to their former places of abode.

In 1555, a bookseller, named Bartholomew Hector, was condemned to suffer. He was a man who had endured great spiritual distress before he embraced the religion of the Vaudois. He prayed for the judges, "That God would forgive them, and open their eyes," and when he was called to be examined, he would answer nothing before he had prayed to God. He was burnt at Turin. In 1557, the minister of Angrogne also, named Varnigle, endured the flames with constancy at Turin.

Some of the Waldenses who left Dauphiny and Piedmont, and went, in 1370, to Calabria, in Italy, were destroyed in 1560, by the pope's orders. Stephen Negrin, a minister, was starved to death. Pope Pius IV. saw another minister (Lewis Pascal) burnt alive, at Rome, before his eyes; the martyr solemnly summoning the pope and cardinals to appear hereafter before the LAMB'S throne of judgment. Many of these poor Waldenses in Calabria were pursued in the woods, tortured and murdered by the inquisitors, sent to the galleys, &c. till they were all destroyed. Though treated as outcasts on earth, many of them died, however, with the hope of being as the angels in heaven.

In 1601, a merchant of Lucerne, named Copin, was unjustly put into prison at Aost, and was able in that affliction to comfort his wife and offspring. In a letter, he wrote, "My trust in Almighty God is, that of his abundant mercy he will receive my soul into heaven, for the sake of his Son Christ

Digitized by Google

Jesus, by whom I believe that our sins are blotted out, even by his precious death and passion; and I beg at his merciful hands, that he will accompany me unto the end, by the powerful assistance of his Holy Spirit." He died in prison. Five hundred families of the Waldenses, in the valleys of Maties and Meane, and the marquisate of Saluces, left their houses and goods during a persecution, and went to Dauphiny, in 1602, in order that they might preserve their faith and a good conscience.

In the year 1655, new calamities befell the Waldenses of Piedmont. At Villar and Bobi, many of those above fifteen years of age, who refused to go to mass, were put to death. Martha Constantine was treated with cruelty and indecency, and then put to death by having her breasts cut off. Jacob Perrin, elder of the church of Villar, and David his brother, were flayed alive. Michialin, of Latour, had four children killed, one after another, before him, because he would not change his religion. Magdalen Fontaine, a child of ten years, was ill-treated, and then murdered. Another of the same age was burnt at Villeneuve. Jacob Birone, a schoolmaster of Rora, steadfastly refusing to go to mass, was tortured and beheaded. Paul Garnier very patiently bore having his eyes put out, and being flayed alive. Many were thrown over the rocks. Lucy Besson, endeavouring to flee across the mountains, was delivered of an infant, who expired of the cold, as did the mother and two other children. Thomas Malgher died of famine in a cave. Jacob Rosen was murdered for refusing, to his last breath, to pray to

Digitized by Google

the saints. When Pullins, of Latour, was desired by the monks to renounce his religion, he said, "He never would embrace idolatry, and that he was happy in being thought worthy to suffer for the name of Christ." When put in mind of his wife and children who depended on his labour, he replied, "I would have my wife and children, as well as myself, to consider their souls more than their bodies, and the next world more than this; and with respect to the distresses I may leave them in, God is merciful, and will provide for them." Paul Clement, an elder, when shown the dead bodies of his murdered fellow-protestants, said, "You may kill the body, but you cannot injure the soul of a true believer."—He was hanged, and shot at as a mark. Daniel Rambant, the father of a large family, constantly refusing to believe in the Roman Catholic superstitions, had one joint of his fingers cut off every day,—then his hands and feet—and at length he was stabbed. A lady, named Constantia Bellione, discovered a faith answerable to her Christian name, it was constant and immoveable, amidst many torments, till she expired. Judith Mondon, refusing to change her religion, was beaten to death with bludgeons. Isaiah Mondon, an elderly man, fled to the cleft of a rock in winter, living on roots and snow, till he was found by the soldiers and murdered. A woman, named Garniero, was shot in one breast whilst suckling an infant with the other, afterwards murdered, and her child put to a Roman Catholic nurse. Mary Revel was shot to death whilst on her knees in fervent prayer. Several men, women, and children who had been



Digitized by Google

some weeks in a cave, being found, earnestly prayed to God, and then suffered themselves to be murdered.

These few instances will give some faint idea of the dreadful sufferings of the Waldenses at this time. When the soldiers endeavoured to attack a place called Rora, they were driven back by the people, and a war began between them and their persecutors. The leader of the Waldenses, named Gianavel, and his men, after each victory, returned thanks to God, usually repeating Psalm xi. The numerous troops sent against them at last prevailing, one hundred and twenty-six men, women, and children, at Rora, were put to death on the first day, some being crucified. Gianavel's wife and children were taken prisoners. Gianavel, and another officer named Jahier, continued the war. Jahier was killed in battle. When Michael Bertino was killed, his son took his station, saying, "I have lost my father: but courage, fellow-soldiers, God is a father to us all." At length the Protestants of Switzerland tried to procure the duke of Savoy's protection to his subjects the Waldenses; and Oliver Cromwell wrote to the Protestant princes of Europe in their behalf, sent Sir Samuel Morland (who has written an affecting history of this persecution) to Turin, to plead the cause of the Waldenses, whilst the people of England subscribed above 38,000*l.* for their relief. This made the duke of Savoy end the persecution.

However, in 1686, there appeared an edict forbidding religious worship, requiring the churches of the Waldenses to be destroyed, their ministers

Digitized by Google

banished, and their children baptized and educated in the Roman Catholic church. Shortly afterwards, the troops of Savoy attacked the valley of Luzerne, and those of France the valleys of St. Martin and La Perouse. The following cruelties, amongst others, were exercised.—Four women and three children, of Prarustin, were murdered in a cave where they had concealed themselves. Marie Roman, of Rocheplate, a young person promised in marriage to J. Griot, lost her life in defending her honour. At Pumian were found numbers of little children cut in pieces, and women who had been massacred. In the village of Perouse, six men were killed in the presence of their wives. Four women were violated and hewn in pieces, after first seeing their children massacred, at Fontaines; where also a great number of sick children were murdered, because they could not follow others to prison. Twenty-two persons, chiefly women and children, were thrown over rocks at Mount Pelvon. David Grand, of Bobi, was hanged, and sang praises to God whilst led to execution. Daniel Negrin, aged eighteen, and Pierre Mentinat, aged fifty, (of Bobi,) were led towards the Alp of Pra, but so ill-treated because they would not change their religion, that they died on the way. M. Leydet, minister of Pral, hid himself in caves, but was taken and conveyed to Luzerne.—He was imprisoned, and fed on bread and water; and was constantly assailed by the monks, over whom he as constantly triumphed in argument. When threatened with death if he did not abjure his faith, he replied, "that he could not be justly put to death, since he was not armed



Digitized by Google

when taken prisoner; besides, the duke of Savoy had promised a pardon to all his subjects: still" (said he) "I am ready to die for the name of Jesus Christ." His example and exhortations exceedingly strengthened his fellow-prisoners. When sentence of death was pronounced, he heard it with Christian resignation. On quitting the prison, he said, "It was a day of double deliverance, that of his body from captivity, and that of his soul from imprisonment in the body; for he cherished the expectation of partaking shortly in full liberty of the joys of the blessed." At the foot of the scaffold he prayed in a manner that very much affected the by-standers, and on the ladder said, "My God, into thy hands I commend my spirit."—A martyr worthy of the best ages of the church of Christ! Even his enemies were compelled to admit that he died like a holy man.

About fifteen thousand of the Waldenses, men, women, and children, were unjustly confined in fourteen castles and prisons of Piedmont, with a scanty allowance of bread and water; and various means were used to render this bread and water unwholesome. They lay upon bricks or rotten straw, and so many together that the very air was infected: seventy-five sick have been reckoned in a single room at one time. Eight thousand persons died in consequence of these barbarities. After suffering nine months, those who survived were permitted to retire into Switzerland; but not before threatenings and allurements had been employed to induce them to forsake their religion —in general without effect; and those who did

Digitized by Google

apostatize, instead of recovering their houses and property, according to a promise made to them, were conveyed to the distant province of Verceil. A great number of children, however, taken away and dispersed in Piedmont, were not allowed to accompany their relatives to Switzerland; and the nine pastors were removed to Verrue, Nice, and Montmeillan, deprived of the privilege of offering religious consolation to their beloved people. Eighty of the men were forced to work in chains for three years in the citadel of Turin. Even those permitted to seek refuge in Switzerland endured great calamities. One company was required to set out late in the evening, and walk five leagues on the snow and ice: more than 150 died in the way, without succour. Another company, foreseeing dreadful weather, entreated the officer, who conducted them, to stay till after the storm: but he obliged them to set out, and eighty-six persons perished in consequence on Mount Cenis. Others of the Waldenses who followed, found their bodies amidst the snow; several women with their infants still in their arms. Many expired by the time they reached the gates of Geneva, and all bore marks of peculiar suffering. These poor destitute fugitives, while they remained in Switzerland, were supported by the charitable contributions of the English and Dutch, which were administered with so much fidelity by Isaac Behaghel, minister of Frankfort, that he was afterwards presented with a gold medal by William III.—Through the generous interference of M. Valkenier, they obtained grounds in the dominions of the duke of



Digitized by Google

Wirtemberg, on the estates of the margrave of Dourlach, the landgrave of Hesse Darmstadt, and the count of Hanau, where they established fourteen churches, naming their villages after the beloved spots they once inhabited in the valleys. Seven ministers and schoolmasters were there supported by his Britannic Majesty. Others of the Vaudois went to the marquisate of Brandenburg; others settled in the county of Neufchatel, at Bienne, and at Schaffhausen.

In the year 1689, that is, in three years and a half after the commencement of this persecution, a party of between six and nine hundred, joined by three hundred French exiles, resolved to re-occupy the houses and lands of which they had been so unjustly deprived. For this purpose they met by agreement in a wood between Nyon and Rolle, towns situate on the lake of Geneva, and at ten o'clock at night, crossed the lake and landed in Savoy. They then went on, paying for the provisions they took on their journey, marching over snow, climbing up rocks, and sustaining the attacks of troops sent against them. Arrived, at length, at the church of Guigon, (a hamlet annexed to Pral,) they engaged in worship, sang the 74th Psalm, and their colonel and pastor, Henry Arnaud, preached on the 129th Psalm. But even after their return, they had frequent and severe skirmishes with their enemies, displaying upon all occasions a degree of valour and fortitude that has been seldom surpassed. One cannot, however, but regret, that M. Arnaud's account of their return affords too many proofs that they possessed more of the warlike than the evangelic spirit.

Digitized by Google

The duke of Savoy at length concluded a peace with them, and permitted the return of their wives and children. Hence the origin of the present race of the inhabitants of the valleys, a population of near twenty thousand souls, who still contend for "the faith once delivered to the saints;" and who occupy fifteen villages and near one hundred hamlets. Thirteen ministers, and the schools for children, have been chiefly supported for more than a century, by sums of money sent from England and Holland.

When we consider that these persecutions were carried on in an age when learning flourished, we have an awful proof that the enmity of the heart of man against God is the same in all ages, and that learning does not remove this enmity: to do this is the work of God himself, by the communication of his heavenly grace.

## CHAPTER III.

### BRIEF ACCOUNT OF PERSONS OF EMINENT PIETY.

During the seventeenth century, a great number of distinguished pious believers appeared in the Christian church; only a few, however, can be here mentioned.

### Sect. 1.—*Pious princes and princesses.*

Henry, prince of Wales, was the son of king James I., and, in his time, the darling of the nation. His zeal for religion was such, that he would, if he had lived, have used his endeavours

Digitized by Google

to reconcile the divisions among its professors. He usually retired three times a day for his private devotions, and was scarce once a month absent from public worship. His attention to the preacher was fixed. He had great esteem for all divines, whose conduct corresponded with their profession. He loved that preaching (he said) which went nearest to the heart. Cursing and swearing he abhorred, He died when a young man, and on his death-bed said, "I in vain wish for that time I have lost in vain recreations:" yet he departed in hope of a blessed resurrection.

His brother, KING CHARLES I. who had been engaged in lamentable disputes with his parliament, appears, during the latter part of his life, to have cherished much of a devotional spirit, till the awful event of his death. His son James II. tried, but in vain, to re-establish the Roman Catholic religion in England. Having given up his crown and left the kingdom, his pious daughter MARY II. and her husband William, prince of Orange, came to the throne. It has been said, that "one might as soon have turned the sun from its course, as this excellent queen from her devotions." She showed no signs of weariness, even when clergymen of low talents preached before her, if they appeared to do their best, for she would not discourage any. She carefully kept the Lord's day, and once would not give so bad an example as to go on that day and see a packet-boat that had been stranded on the coast of Holland.—When, at one time, the king was in danger abroad, and her mind distressed on other accounts, she wrote thus, "My heart is so oppressed, that I can scarce

Digitized by Google

breathe. In this I don't know what I should do, were it not for the grace of God which supports me." She had good books put in different places for her attendants, that they might not be in danger through idleness—she encouraged societies for the promotion of piety—she inquired into the state of religion in the colonies—and approved of a college (called William and Mary College) in America, partly for the conversion of the heathen. The welfare of the established church, to which she was sincerely attached, lay near her heart; but she was also affectionately candid towards dissenters, and was so careful of persecuted foreign churches, that she granted an annual sum to the Waldenses. She was only about thirty-three at the time of her death, and in her illness said, "I thank God I have, from my youth, learned a true doctrine, that repentance is not to be put off to a death-bed." "Nothing then did her good" (she said) "but prayer." Holy in life, she enjoyed peace in her death. To her, dying was but to "sleep in Jesus."

The PRINCESS ELIZABETH of the Rhine, was eminent for her piety and virtues. The wisdom, justice, and prudence, with which she governed her small territory, greatly endeared her to her subjects in general, and her charity and benevolence won the hearts of the poor. She delighted in Christian fellowship with some pious ladies, as her companions. She remarked, "It is a hard thing to be faithful to what one knows—The way *is* strait! I am afraid that I am not serious enough in my mind to walk in it." One of her Christian friends, ANNA MARIA SCHURMAN, was one of the

Digitized by Google

most extraordinary women, for learning and ingenuity, that the world has ever seen. During her last illness, after suffering much, she said,—"I have proceeded one step further towards eternity; and if the Lord shall please to increase my pains, it will be no cause of sorrow: the will of my God is all to me, I follow him! How good it is to be in the hands of God! but it will be still better for me when I shall enjoy more full communion with him among the children of God, in the abodes of the blessed. I have nothing more to desire in this world." In the last night of her life, she said to one who watched with her, "I hear a voice almost continually sounding in the ear of my mind, 'A Christian must suffer:' this voice" (she added) "comforts me in pains—supports me that I faint not. O how good it is to remain in silence and patience before God! My most gracious Father has not dealt with me as with his servant Job, whose friends were with him seven days in silence, and then addressed him with bitter words! for how sweet and full of comfort are the words which are spoken to me!"

Frederic William, margrave of Brandenburgh, (a prince who, when he found the public state of things alarming, used to pray, "Lord, make known to me the way in which I should walk,") was offered the crown of Poland, upon condition of renouncing the Protestant religion; but he rejected it as a poor exchange for his conscience. He greatly succoured persecuted Protestants, and afforded them an asylum in their distress. A short time before his death, he received the holy communion with tears,

Digitized by Google

SECT. 2.—*Religious noblemen and statesmen.*

JOHN LORD HARRINGTON, who was much esteemed by Henry prince of Wales, made it his practice to keep a diary, in which he carefully marked his progress in the divine life, and the strength he gained from time to time over his natural corruptions. "He hated, it is said, those two nurses of uncleanness, idleness and much sleep." He was exemplary for justice, and very anxious to pay those debts which his father had contracted, saying, "My honour and my honesty are my nearest heirs." He was a religious observer of the Lord's day, and frequented church twice a day, and immediately after the sermon withdrew for half an hour, to meditate on what he had heard. He used monthly to receive the Lord's Supper, and kept a private fast the day before receiving. The morning before he received, he frequently read 1 Cor. xi. and would instruct his servants in the right manner of preparation. He was very kind to the poor, and gave a tenth of his income to charitable uses. At the beginning of his last sickness, he strongly apprehended that death would be the end of it, and accordingly prepared for the grave. He declared his faith in, and undoubted hope of salvation by Christ; and said, with much cheerfulness, "That he feared not death in what shape soever it might assail him." In the midst of many heavenly things, which dropped from time to time from him, he declared, not above two hours before his death, "That he still felt the comfort and joys of assured

Digitized by Google

salvation, by Christ Jesus." And when the hour of his departure was come, he said, "O, that joy! O, my God, when shall I be with thee?" He died at the age of twenty-two, a bright example to young persons of all conditions, and even to aged persons who have families.

JOHN, EARL OF ROCHESTER, was "a very great man every way; a great wit—a great scholar—a great poet—a great sinner—and a great penitent." When he came to himself, horror filled his mind, so that he termed himself the vilest wretch that ever the sun shone upon; wishing he had been a beggar, or had lived in a dungeon, rather than offended the Lord as he had done. He once said, "Upon the commission of some sins, I had checks and warnings from within, but still struggled with them, and so wore them off again. One day, at an atheistical meeting, at the house of a person of quality, I undertook to manage the cause, and was the principal disputant against God and piety; and, for my performances, received the applause of the whole company. Upon which my mind was terribly struck, and I immediately replied thus to myself, 'Good God! that a man who walks upright, who sees the wonderful works of God, and has the use of his senses and reason, should use them to the defying of his Creator!' But though this was a good beginning towards my conversion, to find my conscience touched for my sins, yet it went off again: nay, all my life long, I had a secret value and reverence for an honest man, and loved morality in others." He frequently desired those who were with him to read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah;

Digitized by Google

upon which he used to apply the verses to his own humiliation and comfort, saying, "Oh! blessed God! can such a horrid creature as I am, be accepted by thee, who have denied thy being, and contemned thy power? Can there be mercy and pardon for me? Will God own such a wretch?" At one time he said, "Shall the unspeakable joys of heaven be conferred on me? Oh! mighty Saviour! never but through thy infinite love and satisfaction! O never but by the purchase of thy blood!" Adding, "That with all abhorrence he did reflect upon his former life; that sincerely, and from his heart, he repented of all that folly and madness which he had committed." He would often entreat God to strengthen his faith, saying, "Lord, I believe; help mine unbelief." He had a growing esteem for the Holy Scriptures, which having spoken to his heart, he acknowledged that all the seeming contradictions, fancied by men of corrupt judgments, vanished. Satan, the adversary of souls, used to assault him with many temptations and evil suggestions, injurious to that religious temper of mind with which God had now endued him. Once, especially, the tempter threw the fiery darts of lewd imaginations:—But "I thank God," (said he) "I abhor them all, and by the power of his grace, which I am sure is sufficient for me, I have overcome them." Proofs of the sincerity of his faith, and the soundness of his repentance, appeared in his concern for the pious education of his children, and his strict charge to persons to burn all his profane and lewd writings. He declared, "He would not commit a known sin to gain a king-



Digitized by Google

dom:" and sent awful messages to his companions in iniquity. He laid his commands on persons who attended him, to let all men know "how God had disciplined him for his sins, by his afflicting hand: that his sufferings were most just; and that he had formerly some thoughts and slight resolutions of reforming, and designed to be better; because even the present consequences of sin were so troublesome." That none whom he had drawn into sin might lose the benefit of his sincere, though late repentance, he subscribed the following paper to be published to the world.—"For the benefit of all those whom I may have drawn into sin, by my example and encouragement, I leave to the world this my last declaration, which I deliver in the presence of the great God, who knows the secrets of all hearts, and before whom I am preparing to be judged; that from the bottom of my soul I detest and abhor the whole course of my former wicked life; that I think I can never sufficiently admire the goodness of God, who has given me a true sense of my pernicious opinions, and vile practices, by which I have hitherto lived without hope, and without God in the world; have been an open enemy to Jesus Christ, doing . . . . despite to the Holy Spirit of grace: and that the greatest testimony of my charity to such is, to warn them in the name of God, and as they regard the welfare of their immortal souls, no more to deny his being or his providence, or despise his goodness: no more to make a mock of sin, or contemn the pure and excellent religion of my ever blessed Redeemer, through whose merits alone, I, one of the greatest of

Digitized by Google

sinners, do yet hope for mercy and forgiveness.—Amen. J. ROCHESTER."

When he came within the near views of death, he said, "I shall now die. But what joys, beyond thought or expression, am I sensible of! I am assured of God's mercy to me, through Jesus Christ. O! how I long to die, and to be with my Saviour." Thus, where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. But this affords no encouragement to continue in sin, for of the many who like Rochester have transgressed, how few have like Rochester obtained repentance unto life!

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE HALE was a man of great repute in this kingdom for learning. During the time of his studies, being in company, a fellow-student drank to such excess, that he fell down apparently dead. He was so much alarmed at this, that he retired to pray for the youth's recovery, and for his own forgiveness, resolving, at the same time, never more to keep such company. He once very properly refused a present that had been sent to him, because he was to sit as judge upon a trial. He was the author of some valuable works, and wrote thus respecting the assistance of God's Holy Spirit:—"Those who truly fear God, have a secret guidance from a higher wisdom than what is barely human, namely, the spirit of truth and wisdom, that doth really and truly, but secretly, prevent and direct them. Any man that sincerely and truly fears Almighty God, and relies, and calls upon him for his guidance and direction, hath it as really as a son hath the counsel and direction of his father; and though the voice be



Digitized by Google

not audible, nor the direction always perceptible, or discernible to sense, yet it is equally as real as if a man heard the voice saying, 'This is the way, walk in it.' And this secret direction of Almighty God is principally seen in matters relating to the good of the soul, yet it may also be found in the concerns of this life, which a good man, that fears God and begs his direction, shall very often, if not at all times, find. I can call my own experience to witness that, even in the external actions of my whole life, I was never disappointed of the best guidance and direction, when I have, in humility and sincerity, implored the secret direction and guidance of the divine wisdom. The observation of the secret admonition of the Spirit of God in the heart, is an effectual means to cleanse and sanctify thy heart, and the more it is attended to, the more it will be conversant with thy soul for thy instruction.—In the midst of thy difficulties it will be thy counsellor—in the midst of thy temptations it will be thy strength, and grace sufficient for thee—in the midst of thy troubles it will be thy light and thy comforter: only beware thou neglect not the voice of this Spirit; it may be, thy neglect may quench it, and thou mayest never hear that voice more. It is impossible for thee to enjoy that which must make thee happy, till thou art deeply sensible of thy own emptiness and nothingness, and thy spirit thereby brought down, and laid in the dust.—The Spirit of Christ is an humbling Spirit, the more thou hast of it, the more it will humble thee; and it is a sign that either thou hast it not, or that it is yet overmastered by thy corruptions, if thy heart be still

Digitized by Google

haughty. Watch, therefore, the secret persuasions and dissuasions of the Spirit of God, and beware thou quench it not, nor grieve it, be sure thou observe this voice—this wind that blows where it lists, if shut out, resisted, or grieved, may haply never breathe upon thee again, but leave thee to be hardened in thy sins; but if observed and obeyed, thou shalt be sure to have it thy monitor and director upon all occasions." This great and good lawyer looked upon this world as "a little nursery, wherein Christians may be pruned, till transplanted to paradise."

The Honourable Robert Boyle, one of the most eminent philosophers this kingdom ever produced, was born in Ireland. This excellent man spent near 1000*l.* a year in charities, chiefly in extending the knowledge of Christ and the Scriptures. With this view he was at a great expense in procuring editions of the Bible, Testament, and other religious books, printed in various languages, and dispersed in America, the East Indies, the Levant, and Ireland. He was also a very active and generous friend of missions, and corresponded with the excellent missionary, Elliott. When some wished to persuade him to be a clergyman, he declined, because he did not feel any tendency of mind which he could safely esteem "being moved by the Holy Ghost." Mr. Boyle's chief employment was in experimental philosophy, which made him one of the most useful members of the Royal Society; and he concludes an article of his will, relating to that Society, by "wishing them a happy success in their attempts to discover the true nature of the works of God; and praying that they,



Digitized by Google

and all other searchers into physical truths, may cordially refer their attainments to the glory of the great Author of nature, and to the comfort of mankind." Bishop Burnet relates, that Mr. Boyle always made a kind of pause in his discourse when he named the name of God. He lived forty years with his sister, lady Ranelagh, a woman of eminent piety. Another sister, the countess of Warwick, was also a Christian of high attainments in the divine life.

Sir EDMUNDBURY GODFREY, an eminent magistrate, was very charitable as well as upright. During the plague at London he remained when many others left the city, and was most active in relieving the distressed. His zeal for the Protestant religion at length induced some persons to strangle him.

PHILIP DE MORNAY, baron du Plessis, was converted when a boy from the Roman Catholic religion, by reading the New Testament. He was respected by Henry IV., king of France, and employed by him as ambassador to queen Elizabeth. He was looked upon as one of the most able and useful men among the French Protestants; and wrote much in their defence. In his last illness he repeated the words of Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Being reminded of his services to the church, he replied, "Alas! what was there of mine in that work? say not it was I, but the grace of God which was in me."

OXENSTERN, chancellor of Sweden, had an important concern in the political affairs of Europe. After his retirement from public business, being

Digitized by Google

visited by Whitelocke, ambassador from England, he said to him, "I have seen much, and enjoyed much of this world, but I never knew how to live till now. I thank my good God, that has given me time to know him, and to know myself. All the comfort I have, and which is more than the whole world can give, is—feeling the good Spirit of God in my heart, and reading in this good book (holding up the Bible) which came from it. You are now in the prime of your age and vigour, and in great favour and business; but this will all leave you, and you will one day better understand and relish what I say to you; and then you will find that there is more wisdom, truth, comfort, and pleasure, in retiring and turning your heart from the world to the good Spirit of God, and in reading the Bible, than in all courts and favours of princes."

### Sect. 3.—*Pious prelates and clergymen of the united church of England and Ireland.*

The following may be mentioned amongst other ornaments of the church in this kingdom. Dr. Usher, archbishop of Armagh, who was born at Dublin, and educated at the college there, came over to England in 1640, and thus providentially escaped the Irish massacre. Few persons surpassed him in solid learning. He had several friends eminent in the same way. One of them, Selden, toward the end of his days, in his conference with Usher, declared, "That notwithstanding he had been so laborious in his inquiries, and curious in his collections, and had possessed

Digitized by Google

himself of a treasure of books and manuscripts upon all ancient subjects; yet he could rest his soul on none, save the Scriptures: and above all, that passage lay most remarkably upon his mind, Titus, ii. 11—15." It may be added, that others of the same period distinguished, like Usher, for their learning, but not so deeply attentive to piety, have expressed regret on that account; for instance, Grotius, of Holland, who wrote much in defence of the Christian faith, yet said, "I would give all my learning and honour for the plain integrity of Jean Urick, who was a religious poor man, that spent eight hours of his time in religious exercises, eight in labour, and but eight in meals, sleep, &c. To one that admired his great industry, Grotius remarked,—"I have consumed my life in laboriously doing nothing." To another that inquired what course to take—he answered, "Be serious." Another man of extraordinary learning, Salmasius, confessed that he had mistaken true learning, and that in which solid happiness consists. "I have lost" (said he) "a world of time; that most precious thing in the world: whereof, had I but one year more, it should be spent in reading David's psalms, and Paul's epistles." Archbishop Usher had cultivated much inward piety, in addition to learning; he was a truly devout man, and after conversation with his friend Dr. Preston, would say, "Come, one word of Christ before we part." He died at Ryegate, his last words being, "Lord, especially forgive my sins of omission."

Dr. Joseph Hall, bishop of Exeter, was a man of high reputation in the church of England. He

Digitized by Google

was one of the English divines who attended the synod of Dort, in Holland, which was assembled on account of the doctrines of Arminius, of Amsterdam. The followers of Arminius differed from those of Calvin, on the following subjects,—Predestination—Particular Redemption—Total Depravity—Effectual Calling—and Certain Perseverance, the truth of which the Arminians disputed. Bishop Hall thus expressed himself in a letter to Sir R. Darcy.—"What a heaven do I feel in myself, when (after many traverses of meditation) I find in my heart a feeling possession of my God! when I can walk and converse with the God of heaven, not without an openness of heart and familiarity: when my soul hath fast and sensible hold of my Saviour . . . . and can dare secretly avouch, I know whom I have believed: when I can look upon all this inferior creation with the eyes of a stranger, and am transported to my home in my thoughts, solacing myself in the view and meditation of my future glory: . . . . . lastly, when I can find myself . . . . made firm . . . . fit to entertain all events; the good with moderate regard, the evil with courage and patience, both with thanks; strongly settled to good purposes, constant and cheerful in devotion; and in a word ready for God, yea full of God. Sometimes I can be thus, and pity the poor and miserable prosperity of the godless; and laugh at their months of vanity, and sorrow at my own: but then again, the world thrusts itself betwixt me and heaven; and by his dark and indigested parts, eclipseth that light which shined to my soul. Now a senseless dulness overtakes me, and besots me;

Digitized by Google

my love to devotion is little, my joy none at all; God's face is hid, and I am troubled. . . . . Thus I am till I single myself out alone to him that alone can revive me:—I reason with myself, and confer with him—I chide myself, and entreat him—and after some spiritual speeches interchanged, I renew my familiarity with him, and he the tokens of his love to me. Lo, then I live again, and applaud myself in this happiness, and wish it might ever continue. . . . . Thus I hold on, rising and falling. . . . This is our warfare, we are not to look to triumph always: we must smart sometimes and complain—and then again rejoice that we can complain—and grieve that we can rejoice no more—and that we can grieve no more. Our hope is, if we be patient, we shall . . . . be constant." The volumes this great prelate has left, are much valued by devout readers.

Dr. LEIGHTON, archbishop of Glasgow, a very meek, learned, and pious man, whose works are read with great delight by those who love the spirit of devotion, was sent by king Charles II. to try to unite the church of Scotland to that of England. His love of peace and unity fitted him for the employment, but the attempt failed.—This excellent man afterwards resigned his archbishopric, and retired to a private life in the country, where he spent his last ten years in a heavenly frame of mind, dividing his time between his private devotions, public ministry, and acts of benevolence.

Bishop PEARSON was one of the greatest divines of the age. His principal work is his "Exposition of the Creed."

Digitized by Google

Dr. Jeremy Taylor was another bishop, alike remarkable for the depth of his learning, the fertility of his genius, and the splendour of that eloquence which pervades all his writings. In one place he remarks, respecting the difference between a good and an evil man, and the more valuable knowledge of religion possessed by the good man,—"They both read the Scriptures; they read and hear the same sermons; they have capable understandings; they both believe what they hear and what they read; and yet the event is vastly different. The reason is, the one understands by one principle, the other by another; the one understands by nature, the other by grace; the one by human learning, the other by divine; the one understands as a son of man, the other as a son of God; the one understands by reason, the other by love; a divine principle within him, and a new understanding."

Dr. Hopkins, bishop of Derry, was an eminent preacher, many of whose eloquent and pious discourses are printed. He remarks in one of his sermons, that "Illumination that is saving, is transforming. (2 Cor. iii. 18.) If a beam of the sun falls upon a looking-glass, it not only makes it glitter with a glorious light, but it represents the very image of the sun in the glass; but let it beat never so clearly and strongly upon a mud wall, though it enlightens it, it doth not thereby leave its image upon it. So truly illumination that is saving, doth not only irradiate, but transform."

The Rev. Richard Hooker was a clergyman of a very meek and humble spirit, and, in his

Digitized by Google

Ecclesiastical Polity," a great defender of the church of England. Through God's grace he wrote in the spirit of charity, even on subjects of controversy—a thing very uncommon. Just before his death, he said, "I have lived to see that this world is made up of perturbations; and I have been long preparing to leave it, and gathering comfort for the dreadful hour of making my account with God, which I now apprehend to be near: and though I have, by his grace, loved him in my youth, and feared him in my age, and laboured to have a conscience void of offence to him, and to all men; yet if thou, Lord, shouldst be extreme to mark what I have done amiss, who can abide it? And, therefore, where I have failed, Lord, show mercy to me; for I plead not my righteousness, but the forgiveness of my unrighteousness, for his merits, who died to purchase a pardon for penitent sinners." After a few more words he fell asleep, and when he awoke uttered these, his last words, to Dr. Saravia,—"Good doctor, God hath heard my daily petitions, for I am at peace with all men, and he is at peace with me; and from that blessed assurance I feel that inward joy which this world can neither give nor take from me."

Dr. DONNE, a witty poet, whose younger years were spent in vanity and dissipation, was a Roman Catholic, but after much reading, with humble prayer, he became a Protestant, and afterwards an eminent minister. In his last illness, he "repented of all his life, but that part of it spent in communion with God, and in doing good."

The Rev. GEORGE HERBERT, brother to lord

Digitized by Google

Herbert, of Cherbury, notwithstanding his interest at king James's court, chose to be a country clergyman. He, at his induction to Bemerton church, wrote thus: "I now look back upon my aspiring thoughts, and think myself more happy than if I had attained what I so ambitiously thirsted for. I can now behold the court with an impartial eye, and see plainly that it is made up of fraud and titles, and empty, imaginary, painted pleasures . . . . . but in God and his service, is a fulness of all joy and pleasure, and no satiety. And I beseech that God who has honoured me so much as to call me to serve at his altar, that, as by his special grace he hath put into my heart these good desires and resolutions, so he will, by his assisting grace, enable me to bring the same to good effect; and that my humble and charitable life may so win upon others, as to bring glory to my Jesus, whom I have this day taken to be my master." He took great pains to teach his people to understand and to value the several anthems, and other delightful parts of the Liturgy of the church of England. His works of charity and benevolence, and exercises of devotion, were many; yet when a person commended his good works, he said,—"Yes, they be good works if they be sprinkled with the blood of Christ." In his last illness, Mr. Duncan visited him from his friend Mr. Farren, to whom, at parting, he gave the manuscript of his sacred poems, published under the title of "The Temple," with this charge:—"Sir, I pray you deliver this little book to my brother Farrer, and tell him he shall find in it a picture of the many spiritual conflicts that have



Digitized by Google

passed betwixt God and my soul, before I could subject mine to the will of Jesus my master: desire him to read it, and then if he can think it may turn to the advantage of any dejected poor soul, let it be made public; if not, let him burn it, for I and it are less than the least of God's mercies." His poems have been since read by many with profit.

The Rev. NICHOLAS FARRER, (Herbert's friend above mentioned,) after a tour on the continent, where he learned several languages, purchased lands to the value of 500*l.* a year in Cambridgeshire, with a church near his residence. Here he formed a kind of college of piety, containing about thirty persons, including his own family and several of his relations. These were formed into parties, which relieved each other, some or other of them being continually, night and day, engaged in prayer, singing, meditation, or reading the Scriptures.

### SECT. 4.—*Eminent non-conformists.*

WE now come to pious persons who separated from the church of England. Some of those who went abroad during queen Mary's persecution, preferred the worship and church government of Geneva; and, upon their return, expressed their dislike to the reformed church of England. Disputes began to be very violent on the subject; the meekness, gentleness, and charity of the gospel, being too much lost sight of by both parties. Those who separated were called Puritans. At length, in the reign of Charles I., unhappily,

Digitized by Google

religious bodies entered into the political disputes of the age.—First, the "sufferings of the clergy" were great, the church of England being overthrown: then, when political affairs took another turn, upon the death of Oliver Cromwell and Charles II.'s restoration to the crown, the church of England was re-established, and the nonconformists, as the Puritans were then called, endured much, being deprived of the livings given them.—Some of the nonconformists were Presbyterians, some Independents, some Baptists. Amongst other great men who were nonconformists, may be mentioned Gouge, Owen, Howe, Flavel, Baxter, Bates, and Bunyan.

The Rev. T. Gouge was a man of a meek and quiet spirit: but his chief virtue was charity, which he made the business of his life. Before the fire of London, he possessed a liberal estate, but suffered so much in that calamity, that when his wife died, and he had provided for his child, he had but 150*l.* a year left; of this, however, he constantly gave one hundred to the poor; and this with so much discretion, that he did more good with it, than some could have done with a great deal more. For the last ten years of his life, he applied his charity to Wales, where it was greatly wanted, endeavouring to collect the charity of his friends to assist his own, and urging the wealthy to devote the tenth of their estates for this purpose. The chief objects of his attention were suffering ministers, and the children of the poor. For these latter he founded a great number of schools; he also procured an edition of 8000 copies of the Welch Bible and Liturgy; and such



Digitized by Google

was his liberal mind, that he freely distributed the Church Catechism and Common Prayer, as well as other books of piety, even after he became a dissenter. Archbishop Tillotson, with the same liberal feelings, preached his funeral sermon.

Dr. JOHN OWEN excelled in learned works on divinity, which are greatly esteemed by those who deeply study the Holy Scriptures. The meek and candid J. HOWE has also left works on divinity, where sublime and pious sentiments abound.

The Rev. J. FLAVEL, as a preacher and writer, was remarkable for bold and pathetic eloquence, and deep anxiety to promote the salvation of men. The same may be said of the great and good RICHARD BAXTER. Dr. W. BATES was eminent for learning, eloquence, candour, and piety.

The Rev. JOHN BUNYAN had no other education than common reading and writing, and even that he soon lost, by an early course of profaneness; but having overheard some poor women talking of religion with such an air of joy, and such an appearance of grace, that they seemed to him as if they had found a new world, he was much affected, and began to seek religious company, and desire happiness with them. At last he became a Baptist minister, and wrote many plain religious books. His "Holy War" and "Pilgrim's Progress" are well known proofs of his abilities. He suffered twelve years' imprisonment for conscience sake in Bedford gaol, and was at last delivered by the good offices of bishop Barlow.

The peaceable sect of Christians called "Friends," or "Quakers," rose in this century; amongst whose chief ornaments may be reckoned

Digitized by Google

Barclay, and Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania. Amongst the Independents, the Rev. Matthew Henry shone as an able and devout commentator on the Holy Scriptures.

Sect. 5.—*Pious Roman Catholic prelates, &c.*

Amongst the Roman Catholics, also, some persons appeared who were distinguished for their piety and humanity; in particular, cardinal Borromeo, Francis de Sales, and Vincent de Paul. Charles Borromeo, archbishop of Milan, was exemplary for his humanity during a plague in that city. Francis de Sales was a mild, pious, charitable, self-denying bishop of Geneva. Vincent de Paul was a priest, whose humanity not only led him to obtain succours for the people of Lorraine, Champagne, &c. during a famine in 1639, but to found several religious and charitable establishments at Paris; amongst others, one for training young priests and carrying on missions in villages; an association of women for visiting sick people; another of men for the same purpose in each parish; a foundling hospital, &c.

The celebrated Father Paul, of Venice, saw, and to some extent opposed, errors in his own church. When told he was near death, he replied, "Blessed be God, whatever pleases him, pleases me." Molinos, in Italy, insisted much on inward religion, and a spiritual life; so also did Madame Guyon, in France; but they underwent many trials from their fellow-members of the church of Rome. Fenelon, the mild, the accomplished, and benevolent archbishop of Cambray, defended



Digitized by Google

Madame Guyon against her enemies. The chief tenet in Fenelon's theology was, that we should exercise disinterested love to God for his own excellencies, and not merely honour him from hope of his goodness, or fear of his wrath. When sent to convert the French Protestants to the church of Rome, Fenelon abhorred all violent methods, and preached in the spirit of charity.

JANSEN, bishop of Ypres, having revived the doctrines of grace taught by Augustine bishop of Hippo, many persons of piety, in France, embraced the same, especially Arnauld, Quesnel, Pascal, and Nicole. QUESNEL wrote notes on the New Testament. His writings were condemned by the pope, and he suffered imprisonment, but escaped, and died an exile in Holland. PASCAL, a man of extraordinary talents, was profound in his thoughts on religion, and in sickness patient. NICOLE wrote ably on the morality of the gospel.

## SECT. 6.—*Eminent foreign Protestants.*

THEODORE BEZA succeeded Calvin as minister at Geneva. Beza had early convictions of the importance of religion. When he was one day in the church of Charenton, he heard the ninety-first Psalm expounded. The Psalm not only afforded him present comfort, but great support in the succeeding trials of his life; and he reflected on it with much pleasure and satisfaction on his death-bed; showing his friends how he had found a fulfilment of its various promises throughout a long life, in repeated preservations from snares,

Digitized by Google

pestilence, and war, though often surrounded with them: and now, added he, "I only wait the fulfilment of the last words, 'I will show him my salvation,' which with confidence I long for."

A. Rivet was a minister of great understanding, and much respected abroad. After a long life of study, being on his death-bed, he conversed much on heavenly things, and said, "God has taught me more of himself in ten days' sickness, than I could obtain by all my labour and studies."

Peter du Moulin was one of the most celebrated ministers in France. In his last illness, he showed a deep sense of his own infirmities, and desired to die imploring mercy. One of his colleagues in the ministry commending his services in the cause of God, he replied, "You know not how much you grieve me by such language. I have not done all the good I ought to have done; and that little benefit which the church has reaped from my labours, is not from me, but from the grace of God; as it is usual with him to produce a good effect from a weak instrument. I am conscious that I have neglected my duty in many things, which offended my God; but I have loved his holy truth, and hope in his mercy."

Anthony and John Leger were distinguished Waldensian pastors. Anthony, when chaplain to the Dutch ambassador at Constantinople, became the intimate friend of the pious Greek archbishop Cyril Lucar. The latter was drowned by the Turks, it is believed through the artifices of the Jesuits. He had, before his death, put valuable papers into the hands of Anthony Leger, who

Digitized by Google

afterwards returned to Piedmont. Cyril had also sent an invaluable Greek MS. of the Scriptures, called the Alexandrian, to the king of England, Charles I. John Leger wrote a History of the Waldenses after he had been driven from Piedmont into exile in Holland, where he officiated as pastor of the Walloon church at Leyden.

FRED. SPANHEIM discovered an early taste for learning, and cultivated it with great success. His piety was no less observable. In his last sickness, he professed, "That he knew Christ to be his Redeemer, in whom he believed, and with whom he knew that he should shortly be; and that he desired nothing so much as his happy dissolution, his soul still breathing after Christ. Only this . . . . he begged of God, that he would give him strength to undergo whatever he should please to lay upon him: and that he would not suffer him to be tempted beyond what he was able to bear, that he might have a quiet and comfortable departure out of this miserable and sinful world"—which was granted him.

HERMAN WITSIUS, of Holland, was an author whose learned and devout works render his memory dear to Christians, even of other countries.

JOHN CLAUDE, an eminent minister, was banished from France, when Louis XIV. revoked the edict of Nantes. A week before he died, he sent for the senior pastor of the church, to whom he thus expressed himself:—"Sir, I was desirous to see you, and to make my dying declaration before you. I am a miserable sinner before God. I most heartily beseech him, to show me mercy for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. I hope

Digitized by Google

he will hear my prayer. He has promised to hear the cries of repenting sinners. I adore him for blessing my ministry. It has not been fruitless in his church: it is an effect of God's grace, and I adore his providence for it." As he drew nearer his end, one of the pastors being present, Claude begged him to pray; but, said he, "Be short—I am so oppressed, that I can only attend to two of the great truths of religion, the mercy of God, and the gracious aid of his Holy Spirit."

John Dury, a sincere lover of peace, wrote treatises, and took fatiguing journeys, in order to promote union and brotherly love between the Lutherans and other Protestants. Several princes and divines favoured the same charitable effort, from time to time; it did not, however, well succeed. Many who will be fellow-citizens of a "city that hath foundations, whose builder is God,"—when on earth, look too much upon each other as "strangers to the covenant of promise." But, when those who now "see through a glass darkly," shall behold their Redeemer "face to face;" how will their souls glow with pure and fervent brotherly love! and how cheerfully will they join with one accord, in one song, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood . . . . . unto him be glory and dominion for ever and ever!"

Digitized by Google

# BOOK IX.

## CHRISTIAN RECORDS RESPECTING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

## CHAPTER I.

### PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL.

### SECT. 1.—*Missions of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.*

IN the year 1705, Frederic IV. king of Denmark, established a mission for the conversion of the Indians on the coast of Coromandel, which has been eminently successful. The first missionary was Bartholomew Ziegenbalg, a man of great learning and piety. His conferences with the Brahmins and natives were attended with so much success, that a Christian church was founded in the second year of his ministry. On his return to Europe in 1714, he was honoured with an audience by king George I. of England, who wrote letters to him also afterwards, to encourage him in his labours. When in England, he was made known to the "Society for promoting Christian Knowledge," (established in England in 1698,) to whose patronage the Danish mission had been recommended. He began a translation of the Scriptures into Tamul, and so diligent was he in his studies, that he also composed a grammar and dictionary of the same tongue. With

Digitized by Google

this zealous missionary, Henry Plutscho, and John Ernest Grundler, also laboured. The first station in which they were established was Tranquebar, on the coast of Coromandel, which has continued to be the chief seat of the Danish mission. Ziegenbalg died in India at the early age of thirty-six years; but ever since, by means of zealous and pious men, Christianity has been extended to different parts of India. Besides the assistance which the "Society for promoting Christian Knowledge" thus afforded to the Danish mission at Tranquebar, and which has ever since been continued, in the year 1728 it sent out missionaries at its own expense to Madras, who were followed, in 1737, by others to Cuddalore, Tanjore, and other places.

Whilst several congregations and schools have been established, the following is also a pleasing proof of their usefulness as preachers. A certain man had inquired how he might make atonement for his sins; and at last he was directed to drive iron spikes, blunted, through his sandals; and on these spikes he was directed to place his naked feet, and to walk about 480 miles. If through loss of blood, or weakness of body, he was obliged to halt, he might wait for healing and strength. He undertook the journey, and while he halted under a large shady tree, where the gospel was sometimes preached, one of the missionaries came, and preached from these words, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." While he was preaching, the man rose up, threw off his torturing sandals, and cried out aloud, "This is what I want:" and he became a lively witness,

Digitized by Google

that the blood of Jesus Christ does cleanse from all sins indeed.

One of their most successful missionaries was the illustrious Schwartz. He had gained such a character among the Heathen, that he saved the inhabitants of a fort from perishing by famine, when the neighbouring Heathen refused to supply it with provisions, unless Schwartz would give his word that they should be paid. Even Hyder Ali (a Mahometan) refused to enter into a treaty with others, and said, "Send me Schwartz—send me the Christian missionary, I will treat with him, for him only can I trust." When the Rajah of Tanjore was dying, and desired to commit the prince, his son, to this missionary, Schwartz, who was not dazzled by the kingdoms of this world or the glory of them, persuaded the dying prince to place the government of his son and of his affairs in other hands. At the death of Schwartz, the young Rajah shed tears over his body, and at his funeral, covered the body with a gold cloth. He afterwards wrote an epitaph for him, whom he called "his father and his friend;" and caused it to be inscribed on the stone which covers Schwartz's grave. Both Schwartz and a fellow-labourer, Gericke, left their property, when they died, to the mission.

### Sect. 2.—*Missions of the "United Brethren, or Moravians."*

Amongst the Protestant churches which have shown zeal in the propagation of Christianity, that of the United Brethren holds a very high

Digitized by Google

rank. They have supported missions in various parts of the world, and in patience under difficult circumstances, in perseverance amidst unpromising appearances, they have never, perhaps, been surpassed by other Christians. Their principal stations are in Greenland, on the coast of Labrador—amongst the North American Indians—in the islands of the West Indies—amongst the Indians and free Negroes near Surinam—amongst the Hottentots at Bavian's Kloof, near the Cape of Good Hope—and at Sarepta, near Astracan.

The first occasion of undertaking missions by the United Brethren was this.—When count Zinzendorf visited Copenhagen in 1731, to attend the coronation of Christian VI. he became acquainted with one Anthony, a Negro. This man related the miserable condition of the Negroes in the island of St. Thomas, and the desire of many, especially his sister, to be made acquainted with the way of salvation. The count having, on his return to Herrnhut, spoken of this to the congregation, Leonhard Dober, and Tobias Leopold, felt an earnest wish to go among these Heathen; and when they were told that only those who were slaves and labouring with the Negroes could instruct them, (for want of other time,) those worthy men offered to sell themselves as slaves, if it should be found necessary, rather than not instruct the Heathen.

In 1732, Leonhard Dober and David Nitschmann set out for the island of St. Thomas, in the West Indies. The latter shortly after returned, but Dober continued in the island. The brother and sister of Anthony received the gospel with joy.



Digitized by Google

and were soon followed by many more, who received the word of God in faith. The Moravian missions to different West India islands have been so successful since, that about 30,000 Negroes have become members of the church of the United Brethren.

The second mission undertaken by the Brethren was to Greenland, in 1733. Before that time, however, Hans Egede, a Danish clergyman, had, with extraordinary patience, made an attempt to plant the gospel in Greenland. Christian David, Matthew Stach, and Christian Stach, were the first Moravian missionaries. Some years passed before they saw any fruit of their labour. They had discoursed of the attributes of God, of the creation and fall of man, of salvation and damnation, of Christian duties—but no good effect appeared during five years. At length, great success followed, more especially when the missionaries preached chiefly on the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus.

The following are recorded as delightful proofs of the success of the United Brethren at their different stations. Tschoop, a Mahikan Indian, thus relates his conversion—"I have been an Heathen, and have grown old amongst the Heathen; therefore I know how the Heathen think. Once a preacher came, and began to explain to us that there was a God. We answered, 'Dost thou think us so ignorant as not to know that?' After some time, Christian Henry Rauch, the missionary, came into my hut, and sat down by me. He spoke to me nearly as follows—'I come to you in the name of the Lord of heaven and

Digitized by Google

earth; he sends to let you know, that he will make you happy, and deliver you from the misery in which you lie at present. To this end he became a man, gave his life a ransom for man, and shed his blood for him,' &c. &c. When he had finished his discourse, he lay down upon a board, fatigued by the journey, and fell into a sound sleep. I then thought, What kind of man is this? There he lies and sleeps. I might kill him, and throw him out into the wood, and who would regard it? But this gives him no concern. However, I could not forget his words. They constantly recurred to my mind. Thus, through the grace of God, an awakening took place amongst us. Therefore, preach Christ our Saviour, and his sufferings and death."

A Heathen teacher of morality in America, named Papunhank, and his hearers, having grown worse and worse, several began to doubt whether Papunhank were a teacher of truth—and he confessed that he could not act in conformity with his own doctrines. When he heard the gospel of the crucified Jesus preached at Nain, he observed, that he had always believed in a Supreme Being, yet he never knew that, from love to man, God himself had become a man, and died to save sinners, but that now he believed that this was the saving doctrine he wanted. Then, bursting into tears, he exclaimed, "O God! have mercy upon me, and grant that the death of my Saviour may be made manifest unto me." He afterwards said to the people, "I have told you many things, and pointed out a way, but I have now learnt that it was not the right one. If we wish to be saved,



Digitized by Google

we must look to Jesus." Papunhank became a teacher of Christianity.

A boy, called Abraham, not four years old, was not only patient and resigned during his last illness, but his conversation proved a blessing to his father, who happened then to be in an unhappy state of mind. On the day before he died, he asked him, "Father, do you love me?" The father replied, "Yes, I do." Upon repeating his question, he received the same answer. "But then" (added he) "do you love our Saviour?" "No," (replied the father,) "I am just now very poor and miserable." "Then" (said the child) "if you do not love our Saviour, you cannot love me as you ought!" Another child, though very ill, whenever it heard the bell ring, begged its parents to carry it into the chapel; and when they sometimes replied, "You are ill, lie down and rest:" it used to say, "No; first we will go to the chapel, and there hear words of our Saviour, then I will lie down."

A visitor at a missionary station, who had already received the usual belt of wampom, in token of his being chosen captain, returned it of his own accord, and made the following declaration, "I am concerned for my salvation: my sins, which are many, lie heavy upon me;—sometimes I despaired of all help;—but when I heard that our Saviour receives the worst of sinners, it encouraged me to hope that even I might be saved. I then prayed to our Saviour—'Have mercy upon me, and let me feel that there is grace, even for such a wretch as me.' He heard me, and I saw him as crucified for me; I was convinced that I

Digitized by Google

have wounded him with my sins, and this made me weep. I then said, "Dear Saviour! I desire to be healed and saved by thy wounds, and to be washed from all my sins in thy blood. I often thought and felt that, to be truly converted, I should bid farewell to the world, and therefore returned the belt of wampom." He was fearful, probably, that as captain he might be required to engage in sanguinary conflicts, and those dictated by revenge and other savage passions.

In the island of St. Thomas, in the West Indies, was a Negro named Cornelius. He was able to speak and write the Creole, Dutch, Danish, German, and English languages. He first purchased the freedom of his wife, and then gained his own liberty. By degrees, he also purchased the freedom of his six children. He learned the business of a mason so well, that he was appointed master mason to the royal buildings, and laid the foundation-stone of six chapels for the United Brethren. He was also a preacher to the Negroes. He spent even whole nights in visiting the plantations. When death approached, he sent for his children and grandchildren, sat up in the bed, uncovered his venerable head, and locks grey through age, and addressed them thus:—"I rejoice exceedingly, my dearly beloved children, to see you once more together before my departure;—for I believe that my Lord and Saviour will soon come, and take your father home to himself. You know, my dear children, what my chief concern has been respecting you, as long as I was with you; how frequently I have exhorted you, with tears, not to neglect the day of grace, but



Digitized by Google

surrender yourselves, with soul and body, to your God and Redeemer, to follow him faithfully. Sometimes I have dealt strictly with you, in matters which I believed would bring harm to your souls, and grieve the Spirit of God; and I have exerted my authority to prevent mischief, but it was all done out of love to you;—however, it may have happened that I have been sometimes too severe; if this has been the case, I beg you, my dear children, to forgive me. Oh, forgive your poor dying father!" Here he was obliged to stop, most of the children weeping and sobbing aloud. At last, one of the daughters recovering herself, said, "We, dear father, we alone have cause to ask forgiveness—for we have often made your life heavy, and have been disobedient children." The rest joined in the same confession. The father then continued,—"Well, my dear children, if you all have forgiven me, then attend to my last wish and dying request. Love one another, do not suffer any quarrels or disputes to arise among you after my death. Love one another cordially;—let each strive to show proofs of love to his brother or sister, nor suffer yourselves to be tempted by any thing to become proud, for by that you may even miss of your soul's salvation; but pray our Saviour to grant you lowly minds and humble hearts. If you follow this advice of your father, my joy will be complete, when I shall once see you again in eternal bliss, and be able to say to our Saviour, 'Here, Lord, is the poor unworthy Cornelius, and the children thou hast given me.' I am sure our Saviour will not forsake you: but I beseech you, do not forsake him."

Digitized by Google

## Sect. 3.—*Efforts of various modern Missionary Societies.*

(1.) A Society was formed in Scotland for propagating Christian knowledge, which has not indeed chiefly attended to the Heathen, but to schools in the highlands and islands of Scotland, yet whose efforts among the Susquehannah and Delaware Indians in America, by means of an eminent missionary, the Rev. David Brainerd, were very successful. He was a very devout man; he took journeys of several thousand miles through the woods to convert the natives; and his patience was very great. The poor Indians, who before were hallooing and yelling in their idolatrous feasts and drunken frolics, being awakened under his ministry, cried to God, with earnestness, for pardon through the Redeemer of sinners.

(2.) In North America, the West India Islands, and Ceylon, great efforts have been made by the Society of Wesleyan Methodists; and in carrying on these missions, Dr. Coke was particularly zealous and active. About 30,000 Negroes have joined their congregations in the West Indies.

(3.) A few English Baptist ministers, in the year 1792, felt the obligation of Christians to propagate the gospel; among whom were Mr. Carey of Leicester, Mr. Pierce of Birmingham, Mr. Fuller of Kettering, and others. Mr. Carey himself became a missionary to Bengal, and has been joined by Dr. Marshman and Mr. Ward. Their labours have been very great and successful.

Digitized by Google

especially in the translation of the Scriptures into the languages of the East; their chief establishment being at Serampore, near Calcutta.

(4.) A Society, consisting of Christians of different denominations, was formed in 1795, whose first objects of attention were Otaheite, and other islands of the Pacific Ocean. A vessel was purchased, and thirty missionaries embarked on the service. This mission was attended with little success at first, but, after years of patience, God has bestowed such an extraordinary blessing on the missions, that the inhabitants of several islands have cast away their idols, built chapels, and become, adults as well as children, pupils in the schools. The Society directed its attention also to Africa. Dr. Vanderkemp, a physician of Holland, with great self-denial, engaged in the mission. By his ministry at Bethelsdorp, and by the labours of others since his death, many of the Hottentots, and other natives of South Africa, have been taught the gospel. Others of its missionaries have gone to the East Indies, and have engaged in important translations of the Scriptures; whilst Dr. Morrison has translated the Bible into the Chinese language, and the late Dr. Milne was President of an Anglo-Chinese college at Malacca.

(5.) A missionary Society was established at Edinburgh, in the year 1796. They formed a mission at Karass, near Mount Caucasus, where their missionaries have exerted themselves in the translation of the New Testament into a language of the Tartars, and in disseminating tracts amongst the Mohammedans at Astrachan.

Digitized by Google

## CHAPTER II.

### PERSECUTIONS OF THE CHURCH.

EXCEPTING the dreadful persecution carried on by the Heathens against the Roman Catholic converts in Japan, the persecutions of the church were not, in this century, so severe as in many former ages.

Several thousand Protestants of Saltzburgh emigrated to Holland and Prussia, on account of the oppression they suffered at home.

During the war between England and America, converted Indians, who belonged to the peaceable Society of United Brethren, were compelled to remove, being persecuted, from the State of New York to Pennsylvania; and some of the Missionaries were murdered there also by the Indians.*

The Protestants of France had still severe trials, and were "in deaths oft" until the mild Louis XVI. granted them new privileges in 1787. Before that period, they were often attacked by soldiers, when they held public worship in desert places, and many were made galley-slaves.—When an aged man named Fabre was taken, his son, by earnest entreaty, was conveyed to the galleys in his father's stead, and was a slave for twelve years.

* Should this small work ever fall into the hands of benevolent Christians in America, the above painful circumstance (to say nothing of the late destruction of Fairfield settlement) will remind them, that new obligations, in addition to former ones connected with the first grants of land in America, now enforce the duty of greater efforts among the natives of that continent, by American Christians.

Digitized by Google

This respect for his father by the younger Fabre, was one of the means of gaining liberty for the Protestants, when the circumstance became well known. In these dangerous times a French minister named Paul Rabaut, was, at the risk of his life, very zealous in the Christian cause. Many thousands emigrated to England and other countries from France, by reason of their danger in that kingdom.

After the Revolution broke out in France, however, (in 1789,) it is said that 24,000 Roman Catholic priests were cruelly put to death by the furious Revolutionists. Eight thousand of them came for refuge to England, when above 40,000*l.* was collected in the churches for their relief. The Protestants had thus an opportunity of showing the true spirit of the gospel, in assisting the priests of a church which had so much persecuted Protestants. Yet, whilst engaged in this delightful act of charity, they could not but still perceive, that the judgments of God were upon a corrupt Roman Catholic church and kingdom which had upheld error, and persecuted God's people.

## CHAPTER III.

### BRIEF ACCOUNT OF PERSONS OF EMINENT PIETY.

### SECT. 1.—*Prelates and clergymen of the church of England.*

DR. WILSON, bishop of Sodor and Man, was a specimen of the piety and simplicity of the first Christian bishops. It was reckoned that he ex-

Digitized by Google

pended more than 10,000*l.* in works of charity. The writings of this prelate are practical and devotional, some written for Christians, and others for Indians. He wrote thus in the preface to his edition of the Bible:—"The main end of God's giving us the Holy Scriptures, is to make known to us his purpose of redeeming us by his Son: that believing and closing with his merciful design, we might have life through his name. Human reason, though ever so highly improved, can never see the true meaning of Scripture, without a principle of grace. Read the Scriptures that you may be truly good; let your reading be ever attended with prayer for light to see, and power to do, your duty; and meditate upon what you read, that it become a real food to the soul, being well digested. Be humbly content with your present measure of light: difficult Scriptures have their use; they show us our ignorance, our want of supernatural light and assistance."

Dr. Horne, bishop of Norwich, wrote a devout commentary on the Psalms, besides other works. In his primary and only charge to his clergy, which was but a little before his death, and which he printed, not being able to deliver it, is the following striking passage:—"There is, in the present times, a temptation which lies very hard on some minds, and either does so much mischief, or hinders so much good, that it is a dreadful snare, and I wish I could guard my brethren effectually against it; I mean the fear of being suspected of false piety. It can never be sufficiently lamented, that the practice of devotion, and the doctrine of grace so essential to the gospel, should have fallen

Digitized by Google

into disrepute from the example of any persons, who have been discovered to have acted a godly part for mercenary purposes. But God forbid that the hypocrisy of others should lead us into lukewarmness and indifference. . . . . Never let it be supposed that Christians can serve God without the grace of God, because some have been so weak as to surfeit the wise with the presumption and folly of their spiritual pretensions. The life of devotion is still the gift of God; and it must be insisted on with our church, that there is not in man one good thought, one holy desire, but from the continual inspiration of the divine Spirit, in all things directing and ruling our hearts."

Dr. WOODWARD and DR. HORNECK were men of a devout spirit, who encouraged the forming Societies for the increase of Christian knowledge. About forty Societies were set on foot for the revival of piety. They were composed of members of the church of England, who met together for prayer, reading, and conversation, and for mutual improvement.

The Book of Devotions published by the Rev. Mr. JENKS, and the Welsh publications of the Rev. Mr. PRICHARD, vicar of Llandovery, entitle these clergymen also to a place amongst those who contributed to the preservation and diffusion of piety.

The Rev. J. HERVEY was an elegant writer and devout clergyman. His work called "Meditations and Contemplations" gained about 700*l.*, the whole of which he devoted to the service of the poor. He had a very useful way of catechizing children;

Digitized by Google

for when he asked them to repeat the commandments, he would ask whether this or that bad thing was contrary to the commandment; and thus children, and even their parents met with a gentle reproof, if their consciences testified against them. One of his last conversations with his friends, was upon St. Paul's words,—"All things are yours, life and death, things present and things to come, all are yours." "Here" (said he) "is the treasure of a Christian! Death is reckoned in this inventory, and a noble treasure it is! How thankful am I for death, as it is the passage through which I pass to the Lord and giver of eternal life: and as it frees me from all this misery you now see me endure, and which I am willing patiently to endure, as long as God sees fit!" When the pangs of death were upon him, he raised himself in his chair, (in which he died,) and accommodated to his own experience, the words of Simeon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy [most holy and comfortable] word: for mine eyes have seen thy [precious] salvation" ——and those last words, precious salvation! he was heard to repeat as long as his words could be understood.

The Rev. W. Romaine was the honoured instrument of bringing many of those who were inattentive to religion, or who trusted in their own works for salvation, to humble faith in Christ, as their Saviour and "the Lord their righteousness." He preached continually, in his church at London, of the eternal love of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, and of the covenant formed for the redemption of sinners.



Digitized by Google

The Rev. Mr. GRIMSHAW was a clergyman who laboured much in the Lord's vineyard, in the county of York, riding often twenty miles in the day, and preaching twenty times in the week.

The Rev. G. WHITFIELD was remarkable for a bold and pathetic eloquence. He travelled through different parts of England and America, calling men every where to repentance; and great numbers were awakened to anxious concern for their salvation.

The Rev. J. WESLEY travelled in England and America for the same purpose, and his laborious zeal was attended with great success. Mr. Whitfield and Mr. Wesley became the founders of two religious parties, that gradually separated from the established church. The former founded the Society of Calvinistic, the latter the Society of Arminian or Wesleyan Methodists.

The Rev. Mr. FLETCHER, a clergyman, who was Mr. Wesley's intimate friend, was a very devout author, and indefatigable parish minister.

The Rev. DANIEL ROWLANDS was a clergyman of extraordinary eloquence, who preached throughout Wales with a degree of success as extraordinary.

The Rev. GRIFFITH JONES was a clergyman particularly attentive to the instruction of poor children and grown people, in Wales. By inventing *circulating* schools, whereby one schoolmaster may go from place to place and teach children in several schools, he pointed out an excellent plan, where schoolmasters are few, or people very poor, and thinly scattered over any country. In the schools he formed, many thou-

Digitized by Google

sands were taught; and his plans of benevolence were assisted by Mrs. Bevan of Laugharne, a lady who afterwards bequeathed a sum, now amounting to 800*l.* a year, by which forty schools, occasionally removed from one village to another, are kept up.

## Sect. 2.—*Eminent ministers of Scotland.*

The Rev. T. Halyburton was divinity professor in the university of St. Andrew's, Scotland. In the former part of his last sickness he was exercised with many spiritual conflicts, but his end was triumphant. He said to those around him, "Here is a demonstration of the reality and power of faith and godliness. I, a poor, weak, and timorous man, once as much afraid of death as any one—I, who was many years under the terror of death—come, in the mercy of God, and by the power of his grace, composedly, and with joy, to look death in the face. I have seen it in its paleness, and in all the circumstances of horror which attend it. I dare look it in the face in the most ghastly shape, and hope to have, in a little time, the victory over it." To his physician he said, "The greatest kindness I am able to show you, is to recommend religion to you. There is a reality in religion. This is an age which hath lost the sense of it. But he hath not said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye my face in vain. . . . . Every one that is in Christ is a new creature, he hath union with Christ, and a new nature. This is the ground-work of the matter." Just before his departure he observed,—"What cannot grace



Digitized by Google

do! You see a man dying a monument of the glorious power of astonishing grace. Follow my advice, study the power of religion. 'Tis the power of religion, and not the name, will give the comfort I find." To some ministers, who attended his dying bed, he added, "What a demonstration hath God given to you and myself of the immortality of the soul, by the vigour of my intellectuals, and the lively efforts of my soul toward God, and the things of God, now when my body is so low, and so pained!"

Amongst other ornaments of Scotland, in this century, should be mentioned the profound and pious M'LAURIN, and those distinguished preachers RALPH and EBENEZER ERSKINE.

### SECT. 3.—*Eminent Nonconformists.*

THE Rev. Dr. WATTS is well known for his many pious works, some written for the learned, others for children; whilst his Psalms and Hymns have been used by Christians in private and public as the sacred means of enjoying present delight, and of preparing themselves for the felicity of "the saints in light."

Dr. DODDRIDGE was another ornament to the Christian church, whose "Family Expositor" is a Commentary on the New Testament highly esteemed, and whose learned and pious writings display the love that reigned in his soul to all who "loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

The Rev. Dr. J. LELAND, another able author among the Protestant dissenters, wrote much in favour of Divine Revelation, to the truth of which

Digitized by Google

he gave a remarkable testimony in death. "I give" (said he, with a kind of emotion) "my dying testimony to the truth of Christianity. The promises of the gospel are my support and consolation. They alone yield true satisfaction in a dying hour. I am not afraid to die. The gospel of Christ hath raised me above the fear of death, for I know that my Redeemer liveth!"

## Sect. 4.—*Eminent foreign ministers.*

Amongst the clergy of foreign countries may be mentioned Ostervald, of Neufchatel, Switzerland, who was both a learned and pious author.

The Rev. James Saurin (whose father was an exile from France, on account of religion) was an eloquent preacher at the Hague. He remarks, in one of his sermons, "If we consider, we shall find that those dispositions, which some of us treat as enthusiasm, and which others of us refer to saints of the first order, to whose perfections we have not the presumption to aspire, we shall find, I say, that these dispositions are more essential to Christianity, than we have hitherto imagined."

The Rev. John Arndt, superintendent of the churches of Lunenburg, wrote a book on "True Christianity," recommending spiritual religion, and inward holiness, which promoted piety very much. Dr. Spener, also, and other divines, advanced the revival of heartfelt religion in Germany, by spiritual conferences, public catechising, sermons, and written works. Dr. Spener's followers were called Pietists. The excellent professor Franke, founder of the orphan house at Halle,



Digitized by Google

was a Pietist. He was remarkable for his trust in the providence of God.

Count Zinzendorf, a nobleman of Upper Lusatia, humanely received about 600 exiles (United Brethren) on his estate; and afterwards embracing their opinions, he became their bishop, and the founder of their missions, since so successful in different parts of the world.

President Edwards, of America, was an exceedingly profound writer on metaphysical and religious subjects, and a very earnest and successful preacher.

President Davis, of America, was also an eloquent and fervent preacher, whose sermons remain to attest his zeal.

Sect. 5.—*Distinguished religious laymen.*

Henry W. Ludolf, Esq. secretary to prince George of Denmark, consort to queen Anne, had religious convictions, partly by means of sickness, and partly under the ministry of Dr. Spener. He formed a plan for propagating the gospel in the east, and set out for Russia, and a few years afterwards, visited Smyrna, Constantinople, Jerusalem, Cairo, Alexandria, &c. returning in 1700, after making every inquiry he could into the state of religious knowledge in the east, and the best methods of improving it; and his thoughts on these subjects were laid before the Society for promoting Christian knowledge. In 1703, he published the New Testament in vulgar Greek, for the use of the Christians in the Levant. The remainder of his life was employed in the same

Digitized by Google

excellent manner, and both his time and property were devoted to the service of religion. His usual method was, during his travels, frequently to write short meditations, which he afterwards printed, and dedicated to his royal master: one of these is as follows:—"If a man learned all the languages of the world, they would signify nothing to him, unless he learned also God's language, thereby to converse with him. Unless God himself opens our inward ear, we cannot understand the gentle whispers of his Spirit. Thus our Saviour said to the Pharisees, they 'had not yet heard his Father's voice.' And unless he teaches us how to speak to him, we shall never know how to pray to him; since prayer is the speech of the heart. But the worst of all is, that in the state of our corruption, we do not so much as desire to converse with God. Some ridicule the offering at such a conversation: and some, that are reckoned good men, think it not attainable in this life. However, without this conversation with God, all our other conversations are like to be trifling and sinful, and the brightest talents will prove but as many sacrifices to vanity."

Robert Nelson, Esq. wrote several works, chiefly practical. In his last illness he professed a firm trust in the mercies of God through Christ Jesus, and a full hope in the divine promises, by which he was enabled to die in peace and comfort. In his "Companion to the fasts and festivals," (on Whitsunday,) in answer to the inquiry, "What is the peculiar office of the Holy Spirit?" he replies:—"To sanctify and renew our corrupt nature, and to restore it its primitive perfection and

Digitized by Google

dignity. For, since without holiness it is impossible to please God, or attain that happiness which consists in the enjoyment of him, and that the frailty and weakness, as well as corruption of our nature, is so great, that we are not able, of ourselves, to accomplish this mighty work—God hath been graciously pleased to grant us his Holy Spirit, to be the author of all internal holiness, and the principle of our spiritual life; and, consequently, it is this blessed Spirit gives clearness to our faith, zeal to our charity, and strength and power to all our graces."

Mr. HUMPHREY DITTON applied himself to the study of the mathematics; some of his publications on which recommended him to the notice of Sir Isaac Newton, and by his interest he was chosen master of a new mathematical school in Christ's Hospital, which he enjoyed with credit to his death. He wrote a "Discourse on the Resurrection of Jesus Christ." The following is the introduction to what he calls—"A Journal, containing the most remarkable transactions of the little world, in my own breast." (Dec. 29, 1701.) "If there be so much prudence in the conduct of worldly men, who keep exact accounts of their losses and gains; how wise a conduct is it for a Christian, whose traffic is with the invisible world, to reduce his concerns to a certain calculation! If the new creature be the offspring of heaven, where it is formed, and be destined by God to divine possession alone; how advisable is it, carefully to attend the growth of this God-like birth of a man's soul, and see its improvement in beauty and glory, from one degree to another!

Digitized by Google

I am vastly pleased to travel over with my eye, a map of this great world; history is a most delightful entertainment to me; but what world so near me, as that enclosed within my own breast! What history so profitable as that of myself, in relation to God and a future state? The actions of heroes in former ages are very pleasant and surprising—their virtues are charming, though they appear at such a distance—and their pictures, drawn in lifeless history, excite an agreeable pleasure and admiration of them. But I have nobler scenes opening themselves to me, in my own breast! I am here taken up with the most glorious concerns of an immortal life, now beginning within me. I have the stupendous work of God in grace to study, observe, cultivate, and improve—a victory to contemplate that shall end in everlasting triumph—and a conflict, in order thereto, to be happily managed, with which all those upon record are, in comparison, but as children's play."

Sir THOMAS ABNEY, member of parliament for London, was constant in the practice of family prayer, which he did not omit even when Lord Mayor. On the very evening of the day he entered upon that office, he withdrew from his company to pray with his family, and then returned to them again. In his last illness he expressed his trust in the mercy of God through Christ, and declared, "That he sometimes enjoyed such views of the heavenly glory, as made him even wish to die." He was the friend and patron of Dr. Watts, who lived at his house.

Sir JOHN BARNARD was born of parents who

Digitized by Google

were Quakers, or Friends. He early turned his attention to religion and the Scriptures; and not being satisfied with the principles in which he had been brought up, he joined the church of England before he was twenty, and ever after continued in that communion. He was chief magistrate of London, which he represented in six parliaments; and was also father of the city. In his old age, when he had resigned all his worldly honours, a person meeting him, congratulated him on "the pleasure with which he might look back upon his former life."—But Sir John replied, he "could not think of looking there for consolation;" and observed to a friend, that he "considered himself as a miserable sinner, and trusted only in the merits of Christ: yet," (said he) "the little Christianity I have, I would not part with for the whole world." In his illness, being asked as to the ground of his hopes, he replied, "I trust for acceptance with my Maker, in nothing I have done; in nothing I can do. I renounce it all. I trust in the mercy of God, and the merits of my blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Jonas Hanway, Esq. wrote an account of his travels in Persia, and also practical religious works. He had a just sense of the corruption of the human heart. "Our hearts" (says he) "are treacherous, and we cannot easily fathom the depth of our own corruptions." He was one of the founders of a Society for Sunday schools; schools of inestimable worth to this kingdom, and with which the name of Mr. Raikes of Gloucester, will be always very particularly and gratefully

Digitized by Google

associated. Some years before his death, Mr. Hanway wrote his own epitaph, and had it engraved on a brass plate.—It is as follows:

"I believe that my Redeemer liveth, and that I also shall arise from the grave.

JONAS HANWAY, Esq.

Who, trusting in that good Providence which so visibly governs the world, passed through a variety of fortunes with patience. Living the greatest part of his days in foreign lands, ruled by arbitrary power, he received the deeper impression of the happy constitution of his own country, whilst the persuasive laws contained in the New Testament, and the consciousness of his own depravity, softened his heart to a sense of the various wants of his fellow-creatures.

"Reader, inquire no farther;
"The Lord have mercy on his soul and thine!"

DUNCAN FORBES, Esq. lord president of the session of Scotland, was a writer on Revealed Religion. His dying advice is excellent. Speaking of religion, he says, "By religion, I do not mean an outward compliance with forms and customs, going to church, to prayers, to sermons, and to sacraments, with an external show of devotion; or, which is more, with some inward forced good thoughts, in which many satisfy themselves, while these have no visible effect on their lives, nor any inward force to subdue and rectify their appetites, passions, and secret designs. Those customary performances, how good and useful soever, when understood and rightly directed, are of little value when men rest on them, and think because they do them they have ac-

Digitized by Google

quitted themselves of their duty: though they continue still proud, covetous, full of deceit, envy, and malice. Even secret prayers, the most effectual means, are designed for an higher end; which is to possess our minds with such a constant and present sense of divine truths, as may make these live in us and govern us, and draw down such assistance as to exalt and sanctify our natures. So that by religion, I mean such a deep sense of divine truth as enters into a man, and becomes a spring of a new nature within him—reforming his thoughts and designs—purifying his heart, sanctifying and governing his whole eportment, his words as well as actions."

Colonel GARDINER had the advantage of a pious education from his mother, and though he afterwards lived many years a life of vile sensual pleasures, yet he found that sin is followed by misery and distress of mind. Sometimes he would repeat, in retirement, some passages out of the Psalms, owning the many mercies and deliverances he had received, and the ill returns he had made for them. But these strains were too devout to continue long in a heart as yet quite unsanctified, and he was stopt short by the voice of conscience, which told him, that if he confessed his sins, he should also forsake them, and not pretend to praise God for his mercies, when he did not endeavour to live to his service. At length a strong representation to his mind of the Saviour's sufferings, led him to sincere repentance, and he continued, the remainder of his days, a steady example of holiness. In letters to his wife, he wrote thus:—"I bless God, I was never better

Digitized by Google

in my life: and I wish I could be so happy as to hear the same of you, or rather (in other words) to hear that you had obtained an entire trust in God. That would infallibly keep you in perfect peace; for the God of truth hath promised it. Oh! how ought we to be longing to be with Christ, which is infinitely better than any thing we can propose here!—To be there, where all complaints shall be for ever banished; where no mountains shall separate between God and our souls. And I hope 't will be some addition to our happiness, that you and I shall be separated no more; but that, as we have joined in singing the praises of our glorious Redeemer here, we shall sing them in a much higher strain through an endless eternity."——Speaking of one of his children, who, he had heard, made a commendable progress in learning, he expresses his satisfaction in it, and adds, "But how much greater joy would it give me to hear that he was greatly advanced in the school of Christ! Oh! that our children may but be wise to salvation, and may grow in grace, as they do in stature!" The colonel was killed in a battle in defence of his king and country, against the Pretender's forces, in Scotland; and said to those who wounded him, "You are fighting for an earthly crown, I am going to receive a heavenly one."

John Thornton, Esq. a merchant, disposed of large sums in various charitable ways. He was the patron of pious and laborious ministers of the gospel; frequently educating young men whom he found to be religiously disposed; and purchasing livings, not so much with a view of benefiting the



Digitized by Google

persons to whom he gave them, as for the sake of planting useful clergymen in those parts, where he supposed the people to be perishing for lack of knowledge.—He also dispersed a great number of Bibles, in different languages, in distant countries; and with them vast quantities of such books as he thought most suited to alarm the conscience, and to affect the heart with the importance of eternal things. Perhaps it would be difficult to name one public charity, of evident utility, to which he was not a benefactor.

Howel Harris, Esq. was a gentleman of extraordinary zeal in his endeavours to arouse the inhabitants of Wales, from ignorance and spiritual sloth, to a lively sense of religion. He was the intimate friend of the countess of Huntingdon.

Selina, countess of Huntingdon, particularly exerted herself in supporting and assisting Christian ministers. She also opened a school or college at Trevecka, in South Wales, for young men disposed to the ministry, which has since been removed to Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire. In her last illness she often uttered this language, "My work is done; I have nothing to do, but to go to my heavenly Father?" Under painful days and nights of sickness, she never repined; but appeared constantly animated in prayer and thankfulness for the mercies she experienced. Anxiety for the salvation of her fellow-creatures, had long been a ruling principle of her soul. When under great weakness of body, she expressed a firm belief, that the kingdom of Christ would be established in all the world; and a little before she

Digitized by Google

died, conversed on the subject of sending missionaries to Otaheite, in the South Seas.

Herman Boerhaave, a physician of eminent abilities in Holland, was esteemed for his humility as a Christian. It was his constant rule to rise early in the morning, and to spend an hour in secret prayer, and in meditation on some part of the Scriptures; and he used to say, "My morning's retirement gives me spirits for the day, and enables me to act as in the immediate sight of God."

Haller of Berne, in Switzerland, was another physician whose works on medicine are in high repute. He wrote letters also to his daughter on the truth of Christianity, and adorned the doctrine of God his Saviour.

Although many Christians of both sexes, of great worth, are neeessarily omitted in this chapter, baron George Ch. Dykern may be just mentioned as a proof of the value of religion in the hour of death. He was wounded at the battle of Bergen. After leaving the university he had become an infidel, and was a man of considerable abilities, both as a statesman and a general. When the wound was declared to be mortal, he was prevailed on, with difficulty, to admit a clergyman. The general at first endeavoured to put him off with vague answers, professing, in general terms, a hope in the mercy of God, through the merits of his Son. But on the clergyman's putting his questions very closely, he at last broke out into this confession,—"O Almighty God! I am a poor accursed sinner, worthy of damnation: but Lord Jesus, eternal Son of God, thou diedst for my sins also. It is through thee alone I can be saved.



Digitized by Google

O give me faith, and strengthen it when given!" From this time he betook himself to prayer, and spent his remaining time as piously, as he had before spent it profanely. To many officers and others who came to visit him, he "talked freely and fully of Jesus, and of the grace of the Father in him, and of the power of the Holy Ghost through him; wondering, without ceasing, at the happy change by which all things on this side eternity had become indifferent to him."

Since the gospel is of such value to men in the time of trouble, and at the approach of death, then it is surely of unspeakable importance to become deeply acquainted with it, in the time of youth and health.

---

# BOOK X.

## CHRISTIAN RECORDS RESPECTING THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL.

(1.) In 1801, the church of England Missionary Society was formed, Its efforts in the East Indies have been very considerable, not only in supporting missionaries amongst the Syrian Christians of St. Thomas, but also amongst the Hindoos, as well as Readers of the Scriptures, Catechists, and

Digitized by Google

schools for the Natives of both sexes. It also contributed largely (as did the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge) to the establishment of Bishop's College at Calcutta, and formed a College for the education of Missionaries near London.

At Agra, Abdool Messee, a converted Mohammedan, taught the gospel to Mohammedans and Heathens. This Society has shown itself exceedingly anxious for the welfare of Africa, where the cruel slave trade once made such havoc. It has formed several missionary settlements in western Africa, among the Susoo and Bullom nations. At Sierra Leone, African children, delivered from smuggling ships which were carrying them into slavery, have been trained up in the fear of God, and the knowledge of a Saviour; and great numbers of adults, rescued from slavery, have become exemplary Christians.

The Society has appointed a representative to carry on its designs at Malta, and has sent missionaries to New Zealand, and a Catechist to Antigua. It has also undertaken the translation of the Old Testament into Persian—the New Testament into the Susoo and Bullom tongues—the Liturgy of the church of England into Persian, Arabic, &c. and tracts into modern Greek, Italian, and other languages.

(2.) Whilst the above Society has exerted itself on the western coast of Africa, a Society for the conversion and religious instruction of the Negroes already slaves in the West Indies, has risen through the perseverance of the late Dr. Porteus, bishop of London. The Hon. Robert Boyle



Digitized by Google

having left 5400*l.* for the advancement of the Christian religion among the Heathen: the bishop, as one of the trustees of the charity, gained a cause against William and Mary college, in America, and procured near 1000*l.* a year for the instruction of the West India negroes. The bishop also left 1000*l.* (3 per cent. stock) toward the same pious design, in his last will.

(3.) The British and Foreign Bible Society was formed in 1804, in consequence of an effort made by the Rev. T. Charles, a clergyman of North Wales, to obtain an edition, which was much wanted, of the Welch Bible. It has promoted the circulation of the Holy Scriptures not only to an immense extent in Great Britain, but in very many foreign languages; and has induced Christians abroad to establish Bible Societies in Germany, Russia, France, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, the East Indies, North America, &c.—There seems reason, indeed, to hope that the people of almost all nations will, in a few years, have in their several languages that blessed book which is "able to make them wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

(4.) A Society was established in 1808, in order to promote Christianity amongst the Jews. Their conversion had been attempted by benevolent Christians in Germany in the last century, who formed the "Callenberg Institution." The London Society for this purpose, which is conducted by members of the church of England, has Jewish children under its care, and has translated and printed the New Testament in Hebrew.

Digitized by Google

Tracts have been also printed on the truths of Christianity. A few persons have left Judaism, and expressed their belief in Jesus as the Messiah; amongst whom the learned Joseph Wolff, missionary to Persia and Palestine, stands highly distinguished.

The above records respecting religious societies, as well as those respecting societies in the former century, show, that although, through the writings of Voltaire and other deists, many thousands forsook the faith of Christ, yet great numbers have, by the grace of God, been constant in their profession of the gospel, and have anxiously endeavoured to spread the triumphs of the religion they loved,—the fountain of their consolations and hopes. And when it is stated that, in addition to other colleges already mentioned, St. David's College for the education of clergymen has been recently established in Wales, that seminaries for the education of missionaries have been formed at Berlin and Bâsle, and that Missionary Societies exist in Holland and America, the hope may be cherished that these various efforts will contribute much to the preservation and diffusion of true religion in the world.

## CHAPTER II.

### PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH.

Although the early part of this century has been comparatively free from persecution, it is painful to record that several hundred persons were put to death at Nismes by bands of ruffians,

Digitized by Google

instigated by mixed notions of political and religious rancour.

Even amongst Protestants in the Canton de Vaud, in Switzerland, a degree of hatred towards pious fellow-protestants has manifested itself in a way inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel; a few ministers having been banished; whilst pious Roman Catholic priests, Martin Boss, Gosner, Lindal, Van Ess, and others, have incurred the hatred of the church of Rome, and lived in exile for their zeal and piety.

At Constantinople the fury of the Turks against the Greeks led to the greatest excesses. The Greek patriarch was arrested on his way to the cathedral, and, with six bishops, was hanged before the church door. A great many Christians fell victims to the rage of the populace at the same time. Happy state of the church—yet future—when violence shall no more be heard within her walls, wasting, nor destruction within her borders!

## CHAPTER III.

### BRIEF ACCOUNT OF PERSONS OF EMINENT PIETY.

So many exemplary Christians, in every rank of life, have adorned religion during the last few years, that it is not possible to do more than select a few names connected with the extension of the gospel.

The Rev. DAVID BROWN, chaplain to the East India Company at Calcutta, not only discharged his own peculiar duties, but his zeal and benevo-

Digitized by Google

lence led him to preach for twenty-five years in the Missionary church to poor native Christians gratuitously. The Rev. Dr. CLAUDIUS BUCHANAN, another chaplain, by his laborious journies in order to know the state of idolatry and benefit the heathen, and by his valuable works, gained the esteem of all who desire the prosperity of the kingdom of Christ, which he so much laboured to advance. Another chaplain, the Rev. H. MARTYN, superintended translations of the New Testament into Persian and Hindoostanee; and thus, though he died at the age of thirty-one, he had done much in a few years for the benefit of his fellow-creatures, and the glory of God his Saviour. The New Testament, in Persian, was presented to, and met with the approbation of, the king of Persia.

Still more recently Dr. HEBER, bishop of Calcutta, an ornament to literature and religion, has also, in early life, been removed from his labours in the church militant; whilst, at home, the Rev. THOMAS SCOTT lived to an advanced age to complete his elaborate Commentary on the Bible, and other works.

## CONCLUSION.

THE pages of this book having now brought us down to the present day, it will be suitable to close the work with a few remarks; (1.) *retrospective*, or looking back upon the past; and (2.) *prospective*, or looking forward to the future.

Digitized by Google

(1.) In the first place, you will easily observe, reader, that the Christian believers of whom you have read, though they lived in different ages, and in different places, and were members of different churches, and in some of their sentiments differed from each other, yet agreed in those great truths which are indeed the soul of religion, and the life of the soul of man. They were all taught, by the grace of God, their sinfulness, and the danger of God's wrath to which they were exposed. They all "fled for refuge to the hope set before them in the gospel," and trusted in the blood of Christ our Saviour, for the pardon of sin. Depending upon the aid of the blessed Spirit of God, they worshipped God in spirit and in truth; they "followed after holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," and by their "good works glorified their Father in heaven." A great likeness may be therefore traced in these things, between the children of God; and no wonder, since all are "renewed after the image of God in righteousness." Does it not also follow that Christians of different churches and denominations should, as members of one great family, love each other sincerely and fervently?

Again, the reader has seen that it is "no strange thing" that happens to a Christian, if he be called to suffer, in some way or other, in this life. The Saviour suffered, his apostles suffered, the martyrs suffered. But then, if we suffer in the true spirit and temper of the gospel, we shall also reign. Although the trials and afflictions of believers may not be exactly the same now as those of martyrs, yet, perhaps, in some cases of sickness, tempta-

Digitized by Google

tions, and spiritual distress, they do not endure less than even many of the martyrs endured. It is, however, a source of strong consolation, that Jesus, the Lord, is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." His power is as great, and his grace as sufficient, as when he first "ascended up on high, gave gifts unto men," and supported his disciples who died for his name and his gospel's sake.

It is, however, very clear, from what the people of God have felt and spoken when living and dying, that though they were called to pass through tribulation, yet they could often rejoice in their trials. They found that the joys of true religion were much beyond "the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season." The exercise of Christian graces, the consolations of the Holy Ghost, and the hope of eternal life, often made them happier than any worldly enjoyments or earthly gains. It appears, therefore, that the way to be happy is to be holy. "Godliness has the promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come."

It is also certain, from what has been read, that none ought to make excuses for not attending to the care of their souls. That "one thing is needful;" and how, indeed, can we expect to "escape, if we neglect so great salvation" as that which is brought to light in the gospel? The father or mother of a family cannot plead, that with so many cares upon them they cannot give time and attention to preparing for eternity: for we see that fathers and mothers of families did not only attend to their spiritual welfare, but also to the spiritual welfare of their children and servants. Therefore,

Digitized by Google

without doubt, reader, they who are now careful about the things that are temporal, but careless about the things that are eternal, will stand speechless at the judgment-seat of Christ. They will not dare to make those excuses at the last day, with which they now try to satisfy themselves.

If, reader, you are young, recollect that you have been reading of many who "remembered their Creator in the days of their youth," and who continually prayed for the grace of God's Holy Spirit, that they might thereby mortify sin, and "crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts." Since, "compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses," should you not "lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth most easily beset you, and run with patience the race that is set before you, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of your faith?"

If you are in the situation of a servant, the same advice comes to you. You have a heavenly Master to serve, who requires this reasonable service, that you should glorify him "with your body and spirit, which are his;"—for you are not your own, you have been "bought with a price,"—even with the precious blood of Christ our Saviour. It is your duty to labour diligently and honestly for the meat that perisheth, and for your wages, but always keep in mind that you should also mind the spiritual life of your soul, and labour for eternity.

If, reader, you are a child, then pray to God for his Holy Spirit, that you may, by his help, be a holy child, like children that you have read of in this book. If you pray with all your heart,

Digitized by Google

God will be sure to hear and bless you. Your heart is sinful, and you cannot please God without his grace, but if you seek him early, that is, when you are very young, God will be your God for ever, through the merits of his Son, Jesus Christ the Redeemer.

(2.) We may not only thus derive profit from looking back to the past, but also sacred joy from looking forward to the future condition of the church of God. The great efforts made by the religious societies already mentioned, give the most pleasing hopes that the world will become better and happier. The Tract Societies established afford the same encouraging expectation; so also do the numerous schools, Sunday and other charity schools, in which such vast numbers of children have been and are taught "the first principles of the doctrine of Christ." But we have "a more sure word of prophecy," as the foundation of our belief, that Christian knowledge, Christian holiness, and Christian joy, shall one day abound in the whole earth. Great caution, indeed, is necessary when we try to explain difficult parts of the word of God; yet we may see very plainly that "glorious things are spoken" of the church of Christ; such as may well cause "our hearts to burn within us," and lead us often devoutly to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Yes, reader, it will be one day proclaimed, "Babylon is fallen! is fallen!" though once "drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." The church of Christ, although once "clothed in sackcloth," shall put away "the spirit of heaviness," and put on "the



Digitized by Google

garment of praise." The worshippers of Idols in Heathen nations shall become servants of God. The followers of Mohammed shall become disciples of Jesus. The advocates of infidelity shall acknowledge the truth of revelation. Although before that time of blessedness wars may arise, and rumours of wars be heard, and even the enemies of God be gathered together to Armageddon, yet it is a certain and a joyful truth, that "wars shall cease," "swords be beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks." Although numbers of baptized Christians have, during the last and the present centuries, despised and rejected the gospel, yet even the Jews will hereafter be brought to glory in the cross of Christ. The Jews, united to Christians and to converted Mohammedans and Heathens, will become one fold under one Shepherd Jesus Christ our Lord; and then envy and hatred shall be changed into brotherly love, to the glory of God the Father.

During that happy state, we learn from the Holy Scriptures that Satan being bound shall not "deceive the nations;" although he must be "loosed for a little season" afterwards. Then cometh the end. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God;" but "to be glorified in his saints." At "the voice of the archangel and the trump of God," the dead will rise from their graves to be judged. The righteous will rise "to everlasting life," the unrighteous "to shame and everlasting contempt." The impenitent will be forced to pass from the prison of the grave to the prison of hell;

Digitized by Google

but believers will then "put on immortality," and as they are "caught up to meet the Lord in the air," will be able to say, with the voice of triumph, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? . . . . . The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Thus will the true members of the church militant, collected together on earth, be then translated to heaven; and the earth itself, with all its works, will be burnt up. Blessed are those penitent sinners, that shall be "numbered with the saints in glory everlasting." "The Lord grant unto *us* that *we* may find mercy of the Lord in that day."

THE END.

London: Printed by WILLIAM CLOWES, Stamford-street.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google